



City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

Planning Commission Meeting

April 13, 2011

7:00 p.m.

Regular Meeting
409 South Main Street

- 1) **Call to order, roll call, determination of quorum, and review/approval of minutes from the March 9, 2011 regular meeting.**

- 2) **New Business**

Ordinance Amendment – Sub. Ord. Section 10-2-61 (Sidewalk Improvements)

Public hearing to consider amending Section 10-2-61 of the Subdivision Ordinance by adding sidewalk improvement requirements when subdividing or developing on an existing street when adjacent property on either side has an existing sidewalk.

Rezoning – 440 South Main Street Proffer Amendment

Public hearing to consider a request from NewBridge Bank, with representative Mike Jackson of Union First Market Bank, to rezone 0.89 acres by amending proffers on a parcel zoned B-2C, General Business District Conditional. The property is located at 440 South Main Street and can be found on tax map 26-O-2A.

2011 Comprehensive Plan

Public hearing to consider the adoption of the City of Harrisonburg's 2011 Comprehensive Plan update.

Harrisonburg-Rockingham Chamber of Commerce Vision 2020: A Community Vision

Consider endorsing Harrisonburg-Rockingham Chamber of Commerce Vision 2020: A Community Vision document.

- 3) **Unfinished Business**
- 4) **Public Input**
- 5) **Report of secretary and committees**
Proactive Zoning
- 6) **Other Matters**
- 7) **Adjournment**

Staff will be available Monday, May 9, 2011 at 4:30 p.m. for those interested in going on a field trip to view the sites for the May 11, 2011 agenda.

MINUTES OF HARRISONBURG PLANNING COMMISSION
March 9, 2011

The Harrisonburg Planning Commission held its regular meeting on Wednesday, March 9, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 409 South Main Street.

Members present: Charles Chenault, MuAwia Da'Mes, Judith Dilts, Alan Finks (arrived at 7:04), Deb Fitzgerald, Bill Jones and Henry Way.

Members absent: Alan Finks.

Also present: Stacy Turner, Director of Planning and Community Development; Adam Fletcher, City Planner; Alison Banks, Planner and Secretary.

Chairman Jones called the meeting to order and determined there was a quorum with six of seven members in attendance. He then asked if there were any corrections, comments or a motion regarding the minutes from the February 9th Planning Commission meeting.

Mr. Chenault moved to approve the minutes from the Planning Commission meeting.

Mrs. Fitzgerald seconded the motion.

All voted in favor of approving the minutes. (6-0)

New Business

Ordinance Amendment – S.U.P. for Fences to Exceed Height Regulations

Chairman Jones read the request and asked staff to review.

Mr. Fletcher said an application was submitted by William and Susan Cale to amend the Zoning Ordinance to add a use to the list of special uses available in the R-1, Single Family Residential District. The use would permit fences to exceed height regulations, which in residential districts is generally restricted to six feet. (In business and industrial districts, if the fence is used for security purposes, there is no height restriction.) After reviewing the application and discussing the impact it could have on neighborhoods within the R-1 district, staff believed that if such a use should be added to this classification, in particular circumstances, it could be appropriate in other residential districts. Thus, staff is proposing to further modify the Zoning Ordinance by adding the same use to each residential district (R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5, R-6, and R-7) special use permit list.

The following language would be added to each residential district special use section: *Fences greater than the height otherwise permitted, under such conditions as are deemed necessary by the City Council.*

The proposed language specifically calls attention to allowing "fences greater than the height otherwise permitted" because the maximum height, which is generally limited to six feet, can sometimes be taller than six feet or be further restricted to less than six feet. This is clarified within Section 10-3-115 of the Zoning Ordinance, which regulates walls and fences, and explains that fences shall not exceed six feet except in specific situations when they are attached to a principal building, where they can reach a height of eight feet. This section also points out that fences on corner lots may be further restricted in height, and location, due to sight distance issues.

In particular, the Cales proposed the amendment to be able to erect a fence taller than six feet in height to help control deer movement on their property. Concurrently with the ordinance amendment, the Cales are applying for a special use permit to install an eight-foot fence.

There are situations that may arise where it could be appropriate for a fence to be taller than what is permitted by right, thus staff believes this amendment is justifiable. Adding this as a special use requires public hearings, notifications to adjoining property owners, advertising on the property and in the newspaper, and provides the opportunity to add conditions that City Council may deem appropriate. Thus staff does not foresee negative side effects in modifying the Zoning Ordinance for this purpose.

Staff recommends approval and supports a favorable recommendation to City Council.

Chairman Jones asked if there were any questions for staff.

Mr. Way said was it intentional to say just fences, not walls and fences.

Mr. Fletcher replied that it was not intentional. We could actually add walls to the language; it is not a bad idea.

Chairman Jones said explain why we need to do this by special use permit and not just amend the ordinance to place the fence limit at eight feet.

Mr. Fletcher said six foot may be an arbitrary number that has been in the ordinance for a long time. Six foot is somewhat of a standard height that you can preorder materials. Six foot is not overly burdensome as a height, especially if it is an opaque fence.

Chairman Jones agreed that it does appear most fences come in four or six foot heights. That leads me to believe that an eight foot fence is something that is going to require a special order.

Chairman Jones then asked if there were any further questions for staff. Hearing none, he opened the public hearing and asked if the applicant or the applicant's representative would like to speak.

Ms. Lisa Hawkins, attorney with Lenhart Obenshain, explained she is representing the Cales, the applicants who started the conversation we are having related to amending the ordinance regarding fences and the addition of a special use permit to exceed the height requirements. The special use permit following this amendment discusses the specific fence that the applicant is proposing and I will address that portion separately. Our intent in requesting the special use permit amendment was to propose the ordinance in such a way that we felt provided the most flexibility for the City moving forward and evaluating specific applications. By fitting this within the special use permit process it allows you to consider each set of facts and circumstances independently, and individually; then reasonable conditions could be imposed if needed. This seemed better than trying to determine what fence height might be appropriate across the board within the City. In that regard, I believe there are other sections of the ordinance that are handled in a similar fashion, where normal requirements or deviations from the ordinance are handled by special use permit, so there is precedence. If you have any questions the applicant is here as well and we will be happy to answer them. Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Chairman Jones said based on where this property is located I am assuming that this is a deer issue.

Ms. Hawkins said that is correct. The special use permit application that follows addresses that issue in more detail. I actually brought in a sample of the fence that is being proposed. There is an existing fence in place, which in most places is six feet high, although, in some places it may be higher. That fence is not working to keep the deer away or out of the area, so that is the impetus for this request.

Chairman Jones asked if eight foot would be high enough.

Ms. Hawkins replied we certainly hope so; that is the promise made by the manufacturer of this fence. The fence contractor is here as well if there are any specific questions you may have.

Chairman Jones asked if there was anyone else wanting to speak in favor of the proposed amendment.

Mr. Brandon Howdyshell, 231 Sunrise Avenue, said he would like to see this special use permit regulation passed. Behind my residence is the Oriental Food Market; my back yard actually sits lower than the Oriental Food Market's property. They have a six foot fence on their property, which is actually only a foot taller than my four foot fence. Weekly, I pick-up an entire Wal-Mart bag full of trash that can barely be tied shut. I also have four dogs at my home and I find all kinds of food and trash in my back yard, putting my dogs' safety and health at risk. I have no privacy in my back yard whatsoever; because of the topography, if you are standing in the Oriental Food Market parking lot you are much taller than the six foot fence and looking directly into my back yard. I would like to see this special use permit process go through so that I could use it for the safety of my property and dogs.

Ms. Jerry Howdyshell, property owner of 231 Sunrise Avenue, said there are not only problems with just trash. There are people that stand in the Oriental Food Market parking lot and yell at the dogs or yell at us. The Oriental Food Market closes at nine at night and you cannot even be out on the deck in the evenings because people are in the parking lot yelling, throwing trash, or teasing the dogs. We would just like to be able to put a fence or structure up tall enough that would alleviate all that complication with the adjoining neighbor. We had tried several different avenues and when we came to the City and spoke with Rosalyn Ray (Zoning Inspector) she told us about the proposal for tonight's meeting. She encouraged us to attend tonight. We really hope you consider this so that we might be able to get some relief in the future too.

Mr. Fletcher gave the Howdyshells his card and asked them to give him a call to set up a meeting regarding the special use permit process. He then told them they may want to stay and watch how the process goes with the Cale's special use permit.

Mr. Finks said the type of fence these people would be looking for is completely different than what the Cales are proposing.

Mrs. Turner said this ordinance amendment does not have a maximum height, so if the Howdyshells wanted to ask for something more than eight foot, they can. They can also ask for something opaque versus something with holes. They can basically ask for the type of fence that would best suit their purpose.

Chairman Jones asked if there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor of the proposed amendment. Hearing none, he asked if there was anyone wishing to speak in opposition of the proposed amendment. Hearing none, he closed the public hearing and asked for discussion.

Mr. Chenault made a motion to recommend approval of the ordinance amendment with the inclusion of "walls" in the language. I think this gives us another tool to utilize for particular zoning situations through the special use permit process.

Mr. Finks said before we go any further I want to ask this question again, just to make certain that all we are doing here tonight is correct. Almost all subdivisions have restrictive covenants; how is that handled.

Mr. Chenault replied that the restrictive covenants would trump any special use proposal for a higher than allowed fence or wall.

Mr. Finks asked if there were restrictive covenants on the Cale's property.

Ms. Hawkins replied no.

Mr. Finks said he did not want to give people hope of obtaining something and they find out it cannot be done.

Mr. Fletcher said that is something we would review with special use permit applicants when we meet with them.

Mr. Finks said in that case, I second the motion.

Chairman Jones said there is a motion to recommend approval and add "walls" to the language. He then called for a voice vote on the matter.

All voted in favor (7-0) of the motion.

Special Use Permit – Fence Height (Cale Property)

Chairman Jones read the request and asked staff to review.

Mr. Fletcher said there is one correction and I have already spoken to the applicant's attorney about this. The application, the original staff report, and the survey of the parcel all reference the area as being three acres; it is actually double that size, six acres. This does not change the characteristics of anything, nor does it change our view on the request.

Mr. Fletcher said the Comprehensive Plan designates this area as Low-Density Residential. This designation states that these areas consist of single-family detached dwellings with a maximum density of 1 to 4 units per acre. Low-density sections are found mainly in well-established neighborhoods and are designed to maintain the existing character of neighborhoods and to provide traditional areas for home ownership.

The following land uses are located on and adjacent to the property:

Site: Undeveloped wooded lot, zoned R-1
North: Undeveloped wooded lot, zoned R-1
East: Westover Park, zoned R-1
South: Across Grove Street, single family homes, zoned R-1
West: Undeveloped wooded parcels, zoned R-1

Concurrently, with the Zoning Ordinance amendment to modify the R-1, Single Family Residential District to add a special use to allow fences to exceed maximum height regulations, the applicants are requesting a special use permit per proposed Section 10-3-34 (9) to allow an eight-foot in height fence. The property is located between Westover Park and Thomas Harrison Middle School accessible via New York Avenue along Grove Street. More specifically, it is a 6.0 +/- acre, wooded lot located across Grove Street from the applicants' residence at 710 New York Avenue.

As illustrated in their submitted materials, the applicants would like to install the Deer Blocker Deer Fence, a product from Nixalite of America Incorporated. The fence would be eight feet in height knotted with four-inch, open squares made of polyethylene mesh. The fence would be supported by

black enamel finished posts, which match the color of the fencing material, positioned at a maximum distance of 20-feet apart. (The photographs provided within the packet are pictures of the existing fence.) The product is described to be virtually invisible at normal viewing distances. The fence, and several gates, would be installed to help prevent damage by white tailed deer and would be positioned around the perimeter of the subject property, except along the boundary with Westover Park where it will be located a few feet away from the property line. The applicants' contractor met with Lee Foerster, the Director of Parks and Recreation, to explain more specifically where the fence would be installed. Mr. Foerster had no concerns.

By-right, property owners may install fences on their property boundaries. In residential districts, walls and fences cannot be electrified, barbed, or otherwise secured in a manner inappropriate or dangerous to the neighborhood. Fences are generally restricted to six feet in height; however, if the fence is attached to a principal building, and it is clearly incidental to the function of the building, they may be as high as eight feet. In business and industrial districts, if the fence is used for security purposes, there is no height restriction. Building permits are not required unless the fence is taller than six feet; therefore, if this request is approved, the applicants will be required to obtain a building permit before installing the fence.

As described above, the subject property is a 6.0 +/- acre wooded lot adjacent to Westover Park. This parcel is part of more than 40 acres of wooded area (excluding the acreage of Westover Park) adjacent to the Wyndham Woods neighborhood that has historically had deer nuisance problems. Without a doubt, the applicants' property is home to many deer.

Staff does not foresee negative side effects in approving this application. The property is somewhat remote and surrounded by relatively quiet uses including single family homes, undeveloped property, and Westover Park. In fact, this type of fence could be more welcomed by neighbors and users of Westover Park as it would preserve the natural, forested, and park-like viewscape rather than erecting a by-right alternative, which could be a six-foot opaque fence. Staff understands the reasoning behind the applicants' desire to have such a fence and it proves to be a situation with appropriate characteristics, suitable for special use approval.

Staff recommends approving the special use permit with the following conditions:

1. The special use shall only be applicable to the proposed fence in this application.
2. There shall be no advertising on the fence.
3. If in the opinion of Planning Commission or City Council, the fence becomes a nuisance, the special use permit can be recalled for further review, which could lead to the need for additional conditions, restrictions, or the revocation of the permit.

Lastly, the applicants should be aware that a building permit is required because the fence would exceed the six foot height regulation.

Chairman Jones asked if there were any questions for staff. Hearing none, he opened the public hearing and asked the applicants or the applicant's representative to speak.

Ms. Lisa Hawkins said she would like to offer an actual sample of the fence being proposed for the property; however, she would need the sample back. One other item I wanted to clarify, the staff report reads that the fence posts would be a maximum of 20-feet apart, they will actually only be 15-feet apart. At the risk of sagging in some areas the current proposal is to stay at 15-feet. Also, one other item that I was not aware of at time of submission, during the first window of time,

perhaps a month or two, there would be colored flags attached to the fence until the deer get use to the fence. This is in hopes that you do not hurt any of the deer by alerting them that the fence is there. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Chairman Jones asked if there were any questions for Ms. Hawkins. Hearing none, he asked if there was anyone wishing to speak in favor of the request. Hearing none, he asked if there was anyone who wished to speak in opposition of the request. Hearing none, he closed the public hearing and asked Planning Commission for discussion or a motion.

Mrs. Fitzgerald asked if there was any discussion about what might happen to the deer nuisance in other properties surrounding this area. Would this likely worsen it for others?

Mr. Fletcher said I actually thought about that today and no, it was not discussed. Definitely it is a matter of concern because it would not permit the deer onto this property; therefore, the deer would be pushed further into neighborhoods or compounding the problem on other properties.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said this also gives folks a remedy if they choose to go this direction.

Dr. Dilts said it will decrease the available resources to the deer; so perhaps, it would decrease the deer population.

Mrs. Turner said she had thought about this also; but, all the adjoining property owners did receive notification of this and none of them came forward to ask questions or offer that as a complaint.

Mr. Finks said I have no problems with this and it does provide recourse for others. Therefore, I move to recommend approval with the three conditions that staff has provided.

Mrs. Fitzgerald seconded the motion.

Chairman Jones called for a voice vote on the motion.

All voted in favor (7-0) of the motion.

Chairman Jones said these items move forward to City Council on April 12th with favorable recommendations.

Unfinished Business

None.

Public Input

None.

Report of secretary and committees

Mr. Fletcher said Proactive Zoning targeted the Route 33 West area of the City, where they found six violations consisting of inoperable vehicles and discarded materials. Next month they will be in the Chicago Avenue Sector.

Other Matters

Comprehensive Plan – Urban Development Area (UDA) Recommendation

Mr. Fletcher said I am going to turn the presentation over to our consultants that we have been working with regarding the Urban Development Area (UDA) proposal. Please welcome Milton Herd of Herd Development and Jason Espy of Renaissance Planning Group.

Mr. Milton Herd said our purpose for tonight is to give you a briefing and overall view of the legislative requirements for Urban Development Areas and the work that we are doing for the City. As well, I will give you a status of the work that we have done to date on this. Hopefully, there will be sufficient time afterwards to answer any questions you may have.

First, I want to discuss the legislation within the State Code that brought this about. The legislation was first adopted by the State in 2007 and updated last year. It requires certain higher growth localities to adopt UDAs. These UDAs are meant to be places that are appropriate for higher density based upon their proximity to transportation, water and sewer, and other developed areas. UDAs are required to be shown on the Land Use Map within the Comprehensive Plan. The reason the State is doing this is to concentrate future development to get greater physical efficiency for levels of government. The real provocation, we feel, is the shortfall in public funds for transportation and the State would like to have more compact development so that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) can afford to continue to maintain roadways.

In counties you generally see the conventional "sprawl" pattern of development as opposed to the "compact" pattern, which is really what this UDA legislation is pushing us toward. There are two criteria that pull you into the UDA requirement: 1) if you are a locality with more than 20,000 people and you had 5% overall population growth between the two census periods (2000-2010) or 2) if you are a locality (with any population) that had 15% overall population growth between the two census periods. Harrisonburg falls into the first category. Locally, Harrisonburg, as well as Rockingham County, the towns of Broadway, Grottoes, Elkton, Mt. Crawford, and Timberville, all fall under this legislation. In terms of specific deadline requirements that you need to be aware for adoption – the Code requires that Cities, Towns, and the larger Counties do not have to adopt UDAs until July 1, 2012; however, the City of Harrisonburg is working under this grant from VDOT and that contractual grant term ends on September 30, 2011. The City would need to be finished all work by that time; therefore, the time frame is a bit shorter.

The most controversial part of this legislation is probably the fact that it requires certain minimum densities to be designated within these UDAs and within the Comprehensive Plan. For some localities that could be a challenge, it should not be for Harrisonburg. The requirements are that within the UDA the Comprehensive Plan must provide for densities of four dwelling units per acre for single-family, six per acre for townhouses, twelve per acre for apartments or condominiums, and 0.4 floor area ratio (FAR) per acre for commercial development or any combination thereof. Those are minimum densities and again they are not unheard of densities, especially for Harrisonburg. There is a lot of flexibility with this and you have to show it in your Comprehensive Plan. It is a policy; it does not mean you have to rezone land. This legislation does not preclude you from adding criteria or other specifications and what things you would bring into judgment on approving a rezoning to meet it. I think there is still a lot of latitude in how you interpret this legislation and how you make it work for you. There is another provision that is somewhat tricky, and that is because the Code is trying to help localities to concentrate development, it requires that the UDA be large enough to meet the projected increase in population and commercial growth for at least ten years, but not more than twenty. That prevents the UDA from being overly large; it kind of makes them smaller than localities are expecting them to be. The forecast for these increases must be based on the Virginia Employment Commission forecast which is issued on a regular basis.

How would growth be directed to the UDAs? The Code requires that the Comprehensive Plan describe the financial and other incentives to encourage development in the UDA; but that is all it says in the Code. So again, there is a lot of latitude in terms of what type of incentives you might

have or how specific you describe them. The Code also mentions that, to the extent possible, State and local funding for things like transportation, utilities, and others, would be directed towards UDAs. To us that is a signal; in the future the State may start to tie money and funding to UDAs. That is why it is important to take the UDA legislation seriously when identifying areas that you really do care about and target places where you want to see infrastructure and development; because it could, at some point, be tied to State funding.

There is also a provision that the legislation requires the Comprehensive Plan, when designating the UDA, must include traditional neighborhood design development principles such as pedestrian friendly road designs, street interconnectivity, mixed use neighborhoods and mixed housing types. All of these are concepts that many localities have been working toward for the last couple decades and now the legislation says the Comprehensive Plan must include these provisions as policy. Again, this does not require that the zoning regulations be changed to do these; it just somewhat nudges you in that direction. Of course, the City of Harrisonburg is already ahead of this with the Mixed Use District and other districts that support these elements.

The benefits with this legislation are obvious to the extent that you have more compact development; less tax burden on infrastructure; greater efficiency; more transportation options; and it helps take pressure off of rural areas. Some estimates show that it can be about 70% cheaper to serve compact growth areas for localities. There are even benefits to developers with reduction of onsite infrastructure costs. We have seen studies that indicate neighborhoods that are walkable actually have higher housing values and hold their value better over the course of time; so there are homeowner benefits too.

Harrisonburg received a VDOT Grant of \$50,000 for consultant time, to help the City implement this legislation. VDOT selected four consulting teams to work with this grant program, the Renaissance team is one of those four and they were assigned to Harrisonburg. We began working with City staff in July 2010 and really got this going in the fall of 2010. The grant period of work does end in September of 2011. We have been working with staff to do the initial analysis and get some proposals together for you to consider. There are benefits to having a grant; it provides free money for consulting assistance, it furthers your ongoing Comprehensive Plan update and Zoning Ordinance amendments, and, to some degree, it helps ensure an efficient growth pattern. This is also an opportunity to coordinate with Rockingham County, because they are in the same process and time frame as you. The grant also has a component for doing amendments to your Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to help implement these ideas. This is not part of the legislative requirement; it is part of the grant requirement. Lastly, as part of the grant, we are going to do a general analysis of the transportation benefits for the UDA.

In terms of our work/plan schedule for you there are four phases – the regulatory assessment, Comprehensive Plan revisions, Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance revisions, and then documentation and adoption. We have done quite a bit of work within items one through three; things may get a bit more intense as we complete drafts for you and you go through the public review process in the coming months. We will continue to work with you on some specific objectives in your grant such as: 1) to look at the growth projections for both the City and the University; 2) to review areas of the Comprehensive Plan for higher density and mixed use to determine if those are appropriate; 3) reviewing the zoning classifications and subdivision regulations and looking at possible amendments to those to make sure that they accommodate new urbanist features and make them attractive; 4) working and helping staff on public input and what sort of public format do you want to hold on these changes; 5) reviewing proffer guidelines for

either inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan or as a separate policy item; 6) and describing the transportation benefits, which is a key part of our work. Therefore, our next steps in working with you are to review, refine, and affirm the work we have done to date in terms of locations for the UDAs, the draft text for the Comprehensive Plan to designate UDAs within the plan, and possible amendments to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances.

I will now let Jason take you through the analysis that we have done in calculating and locating the UDAs.

Mr. Jason Espy said that one of the value added elements that we could bring to the table is that we are walking through this process with a lot of different communities across the Commonwealth. I am going to give you some numbers tonight that we came up with in the process of analyzing calculations for Harrisonburg. Again, let me emphasize that this is somewhat of a "one size fits all" legislation, and that can be difficult. This same legislation must apply to more rural and transitioning Counties, as well as more urbanized areas which may already have a legacy of higher densities or more compact growth. So our job is how to make this work for you.

The UDA calculation steps are basically looking at future housing projections, figuring out how many acres are needed, future commercial areas based on population and how many acres are needed, and how many acres are needed for the UDA to accommodate a ten year growth but not to exceed a twenty year envelope. We updated the population forecast when the 2010 census figures were published in February and because the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) demographer projections had not been published yet for the Commonwealth we just applied the same growth rate for the previous projections to the updated 2010 projections. This slightly refreshed the numbers for 2020 and 2030; again what we are dealing with are the increments between 2010 – 2020 and 2010 – 2030 to get that ten to twenty year envelope.

How do we calculate the future housing needs – we look at the population between the increments. To calculate the number of housing units needed to accommodate the population increase we use the national average of 2.5 and for commercial area needed we used the average of 60 SF per person. You have those totals within your packets. Again this is where we have some flexibility and I will go through some of those options with you. When calculating the acreage for the UDA the most conservative approach is the minimum legislation of four dwelling units per acre; under that approach the UDA would need 599 acres for a minimum of ten years and 1,241 acres not to exceed the twenty year threshold. Another approach within the legislation says you can do four, six, or twelve dwelling units per acre, where it would be a straight variable split of 33% for each. The final approach tends to be favored in localities which already have densities within the Comprehensive Plan that are already higher than the four, six, and twelve approach, and we are recommending this approach for Harrisonburg. This approach takes how many housing units and non-residential square feet are needed for the UDA and then see if you have existing acreage within the locality's higher densities that can be applied to that and meet the numbers for the UDA.

In doing our review we looked at the various UDA acreage requirements within the Land Use Guide designation and Harrisonburg already has Mixed Use areas, Medium Density and High Density areas; all which well exceed the minimum required by the UDA. In terms of determining how much buildable area was available in these areas we looked at what is developed, undeveloped, or developable. Developed is having some level of tax assessment investment; undeveloped are those areas of public lands, right-of-way, utilities, etc; developable land is land that is vacant or underutilized. Using this approach we isolated three areas for priority; these are areas of your Land

Use Guide that you already recognized as High Density areas. Many of the Land Use Guide areas in your Comprehensive Plan have a range of densities so we applied a mid-point and projected it out through the ten year and the twenty year envelope. The three specific areas we isolated on Harrisonburg's Land Use Guide meet the legislation for UDAs.

At this time Mr. Herd said we want to bring you up-to-date on the work we have been doing with staff as far as drafting language for the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. We have developed some language for your Comprehensive Plan amendment that would meet the requirements of the Code. It is minimal, but that is because Harrisonburg is so far along to meeting the terms of the legislation there was not much to do there. We would like to hear reactions to that language and hopefully, move it along for formal review within your Comprehensive Plan. We have also been working on the Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances and have prepared some analyses of those with the idea of trying to make Mixed Use District a bit more attractive to developers. We also want to make sure that your ordinances honestly reflect the Code requirement of 0.4 FAR, because you do not use floor area ratio as a way to measure commercial density. Finally, we focused on refinements that encouraged Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) projects and incorporate the principles for TND, particularly in the Subdivision Ordinance. The legislation does not make you amend your code; however, the Grant does. Therefore, I think the next step would be to get some feedback on any proposed amendment from staff and you all.

Mr. Herd finished by saying Jason and I are available to hear any comments, questions, suggestions, recommendations, or whatever reactions you may have to this information. We are here to help you on this.

Mr. Fletcher said I would like to add that this is very good timing for us because we are currently going through the Comprehensive Plan update; we can just add the Urban Development Area update to our Comprehensive Plan language if everyone is okay with our recommendations. Also, what Mr. Herd was talking about with the Zoning Ordinance regulations, specifically some the problems that we have already noticed, such as in the MX-U, R-6, and R-7 zoning districts where they are master planned communities and every time someone wants to do something different with the master plan they have to come back and amend the plan. We are trying to help with some by-right incentives to get people more interested in building that way.

Mr. Finks questioned if September was the deadline for approval of all of this.

Mr. Fletcher replied that September is the end of the Grant process, the UDA, if all goes as planned, would be approved when the Comprehensive Plan is approved, hopefully in May. The work that the consultants would continue to do is to work with staff on the potential Zoning Ordinance amendments.

Mrs. Turner said remember, by September we need to incorporate UDAs into our Comprehensive Plan; which we intend to have adopted before then. We also need to review and make whatever revisions we feel are appropriate to our development ordinances by September.

Mr. Way said on the specifics of the Code where it discusses 4- single-family dwellings, 6- townhouses, 12- apartments/condos per acre and a FAR of at least 0.4 for commercial development or any proportional combination; is that implying that it has to be mixed use, commercial and residential? Or is it saying it can be a group of different types of residential?

Mr. Herd said that is very clumsily written and subject to all kinds of interpretations; particularly the part "or any portion thereof." I take the liberal interpretation, which means the only thing that is really operative with this is the minimum densities. Everything else, you can write it as you want.

Mr. Way said when I look at the UDAs that are outlined on our maps there are areas that are residential now, and not all mixed use. It is implying that they will become mixed use areas in the future.

Mr. Herd replied no, I do not think so; unless, of course, you want it to say it that way. As long as you provide for those densities to add up to the required envelope of units/acres, I believe you are covered. The language is so vaguely written and it is very flexible.

Mr. Espy said I think the underlying guide is going to be the land use designation within the Comprehensive Plan. The UDAs are just an overlay to make sure that you are targeting areas that can at least meet those densities.

Mr. Way asked if there have been any discussions regarding urban growth boundaries in relation to this.

Mr. Herd replied no, not that I am aware of; although, I suppose, that this is the beginning of Virginia thinking about that. This is very soft legislation, whereas an urban growth boundary would be much firmer in the requirement.

Mr. Way said the formula that was used for determining the UDAs was done by number of units rather than acreage. If I am reading that correctly, it makes for less acreage than if you do it by the other measures presented. If we like this idea and we want to support this idea, would we not want to spread it wider around the City? To me it appears you have chosen the minimalist approach.

Mr. Espy said there is flexibility with this. You can choose the most conservative or if you have much larger densities available in your Comprehensive Plan, then you can be broader. Again, the density we used was a mid-point of the density range provided in your Plan. You can certainly choose the higher end if you want.

Mrs. Turner said it was asked earlier if we had to use areas where mixed use development was planned or could you incorporate areas where you would just have residential. The answer given was it depended on how liberal you construe the legislation. The areas where we selected to use are all areas where the Land Use Guide descriptions of those areas and corresponding zoning all incorporate, or allow for the incorporation of some level of the mixture of uses. Of course the mixed use areas being the most intense mix; but, the others allow for some mix of commercial, residential, and professional as well.

Mr. Finks asked how this affects the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Fletcher said the text language for the UDA shows up in Chapter 5 and then on the Land Use Guide the UDAs would be overlaid directly onto the guide. This is a rather small amendment in the overall scheme of things.

Mr. Finks asked are we going to do this without public input.

Mr. Fletcher replied this is Planning Commission's opportunity to recommend for it if you want it included in the language and then it would be under a public hearing when we do the entire Comprehensive Plan. Also, at the Public Input meeting on March 23rd we would have the maps available that show the locations of the UDAs.

Mr. Way asked if the population projections given in the summary were along the same lines that staff has been predicting?

Mr. Fletcher said I have not actually compared to what is in our text; but it should be in agreement.

Mr. Herd said it may not be, because we updated ours with the 2010 census.

Mr. Fletcher said it is something that would be double checked.

Mrs. Turner said that is a good point, because now that we have the 2010 census figures we need to go back and look at what we used before. Last time we had several different scenarios of population growth.

Mr. Fletcher said if you like what you have seen, then it can be incorporated as presented into the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Way questioned why a particular section of a mixed use area was not included in the UDA.

Mrs. Turner said because of what our Comprehensive Plan already had in it – areas planned for mixed use at higher densities and medium density residential areas – we just kind of had to pick which of those areas we wanted to encourage first to develop in this form. It does not mean if someone comes in with a good proposal for a rezoning to mixed use that we would not support it because it is not in the UDA.

Mr. Espy agreed and said this part of the process is more housekeeping for compliance to the legislation.

Mrs. Fitzgerald said are you looking for a motion to include this within the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Fletcher replied a motion would be good, just to say Planning Commission likes it and wants to recommend incorporating into the Comprehensive Plan as shown.

Dr. Dilts said so moved.

Mrs. Fitzgerald seconded the motion to recommend incorporating the language into the Comprehensive Plan.

Chairman Jones called for a voice vote.

All voted in favor (7-0) of the motion.

Mr. Fletcher said just to continue on with Comprehensive Plan items – tomorrow, all of the draft chapters, maps, etc. will be uploaded onto the website. Each of you will be emailed a link to that site so that you do not have to receive the entire item in your email. There will be notes to pay attention to certain chapters because of UDA changes and updated statistics. We will also have hard copies at our office, so you can direct people to the link or to our office for hard copies. Remember, two weeks from tonight we will be meeting at the Lucy F. Simms Center for Continuing Education for an open forum for public input on the draft. We have had a map created that shows the changes in the Land Use Guide from the 2004 amendment to what is being proposed now; it shows specifically what parcels have been recommended for change. If all goes as planned, this should go to public hearing on April 13th.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.



City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

STAFF REPORT

April 13, 2011

SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

Section 10-2-61

Staff is proposing to amend the City Code Section 10-2-61. This section of the Subdivision Ordinance outlines some of the minimum improvements required during the subdivision process. Specifically, Section 10-2-61 lists and describes improvements for grading, subgrading, curb and guttering, surfaces, and planting strips. The proposed amendment would add a subsection to help clarify, in particular situations, when sidewalk improvements are clearly required.

The regulation of when and what public dedications and improvements are required during development, redevelopment, and subdivision processes are clear for newly proposed public streets, but for property fronting existing City streets, the ordinance is often difficult to interpret. To be clear, the City defines a subdivision as *the division of a lot, tract or parcel of land into two (2) or more lots, tracts or parcels, and of which are less than five (5) acres in area for the purpose, whether immediate or future, of sale or of building development*. It further states (1) *the division of land for agricultural purposes not involving the establishment of a new street or access easement shall be exempt from these regulations*, (2) *industrial property shall be developed within the framework of this chapter*, and (3) *the term "subdivision" includes resubdivision and, when appropriate to the context, shall relate to the process of subdivision or to the land subdivided*. Beyond this, there are two types of subdivisions: minor and major. A minor subdivision is handled administratively and occurs *where a single lot or parcel of land, which consists of five (5) or less acres in gross area, is proposed to be divided into not more than four (4) lots, or where the lot lines of existing lots are proposed to be changed or vacated...provided that such division does not involve any new public street, road or easement of access*. By definition, most minor subdivisions front an existing City street. If a division meets the definition of a "subdivision" but does not meet the definition of being a minor subdivision, it is a major subdivision and must be reviewed and approved by Planning Commission. Once approved, the property owner must final plat the property, which is handled administratively. All variances to these regulations, for both minor and major subdivisions, must be reviewed by Planning Commission and decided upon by City Council.

Taking into consideration the above definition and explanation, if a property owner simply wants to vacate a property line, which occurs frequently, the topic of public dedication and/or improvements becomes a matter of consideration. This is because the Subdivision Ordinance defines such an action as a "subdivision," and if the street on which the parcel is located does not meet certain criteria, both for right-of-way width or regarding physical infrastructure, per the requirements of multiple sections of the same ordinance, the property owner may have to dedicate property and/or build street improvements including pavement, curb, gutter, sidewalk,

storm sewer, and/or other enhancements. With that, staff does the best job it can in interpreting the ordinance, being objective and consistent, and enforcing Code intentions regarding public dedications and/or improvements.

It should be understood that subdivisions occur on a frequent basis, and often present unique situations and scenarios. As noted above, the only time subdivisions become a matter of debate and brought to the attention of Planning Commission and decided upon by City Council is when a variance is requested.

In recent discussions among City staff regarding subdivision requirements, it came to our attention that the State Code Section 15.2-2242, Optional Provisions of a Subdivision Ordinance, was revised in 2009 to equip localities with regulatory control in requiring sidewalk improvements in particular situations.

In utilizing the State Code Section 15.2-2242 (9), staff proposes the following language be added to the City's Subdivision Ordinance Section 10-2-61 as subsection (f): *Sidewalks. Where a lot being subdivided or developed fronts on an existing street, and adjacent property on either side has an existing sidewalk, the subdivider shall construct, and where necessary dedicate land for, sidewalk on the property being subdivided or developed to connect to the existing sidewalk, even when no other street improvements are required.*

Staff believes adding this subsection will provide more clarity in determining appropriate dedications and improvements in the described situations and recommends in favor of the amendment.

Draft

ORDINANCE AMENDING AND RE-ENACTING SECTION

10-2-61

OF THE

CODE OF ORDINANCES

CITY OF HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA

**Be it ordained by the Council of the City of
Harrisonburg, Virginia:**

That Section 10-2-61 be amended as follows:

Section 10-2-61. Streets, Alleys and Parking Lots.

Add subsection (f) as shown:

(f) *Sidewalks.* Where a lot being subdivided or developed fronts on an existing street, and adjacent property on either side has an existing sidewalk, the subdivider shall construct, and where necessary dedicate land for, sidewalk on the property being subdivided or developed to connect to the existing sidewalk, even when no other street improvements are required.

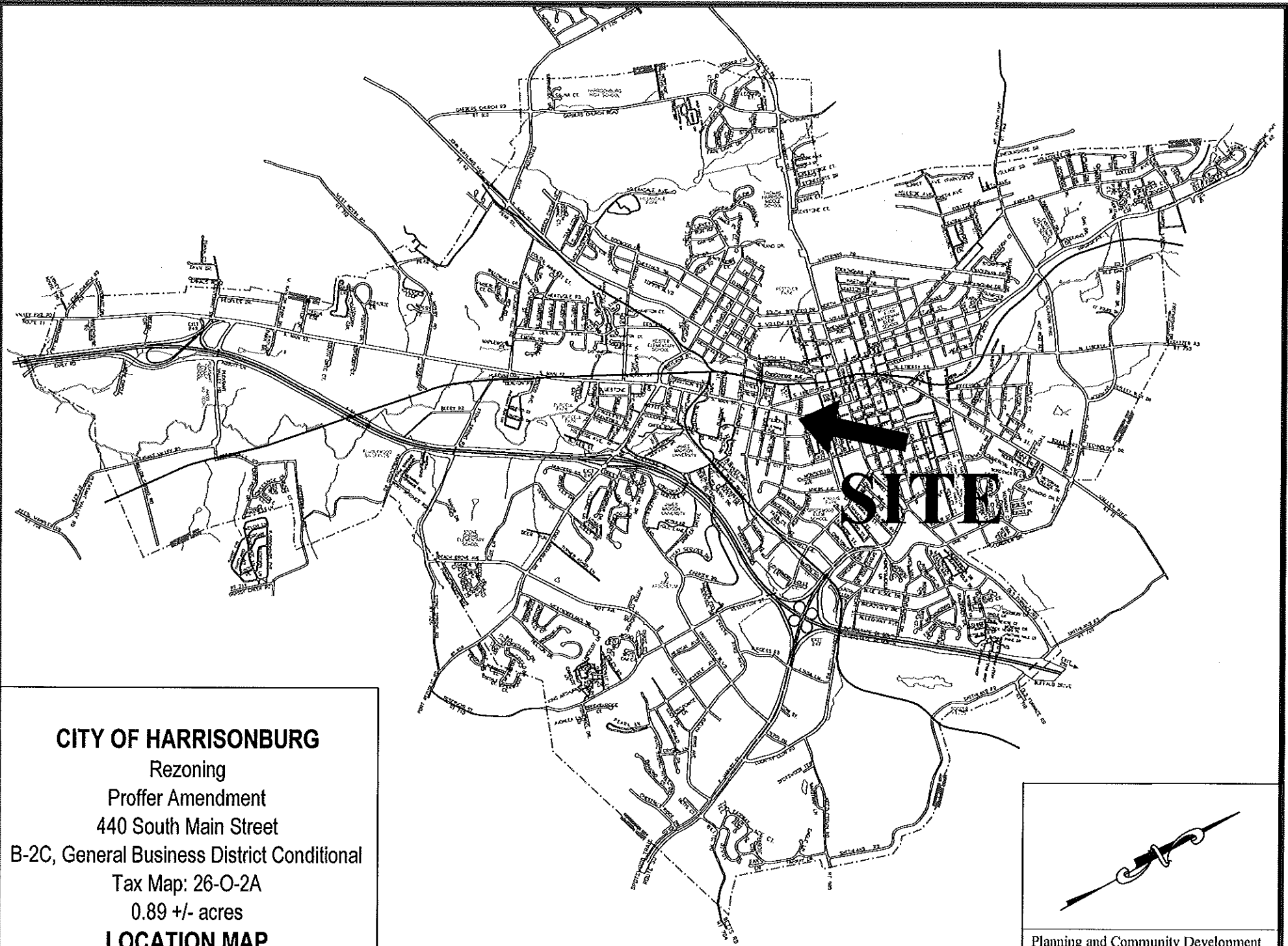
The remainder of Section 10-2-61 is reaffirmed and reenacted in its entirety, except as hereby modified.

This ordinance shall be effective from the ____ day of _____, 2011.
Adopted and approved this ____ day of _____, 2011.

MAYOR

ATTESTE:

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL



CITY OF HARRISONBURG

Rezoning

Proffer Amendment

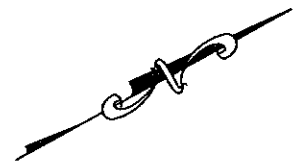
440 South Main Street

B-2C, General Business District Conditional

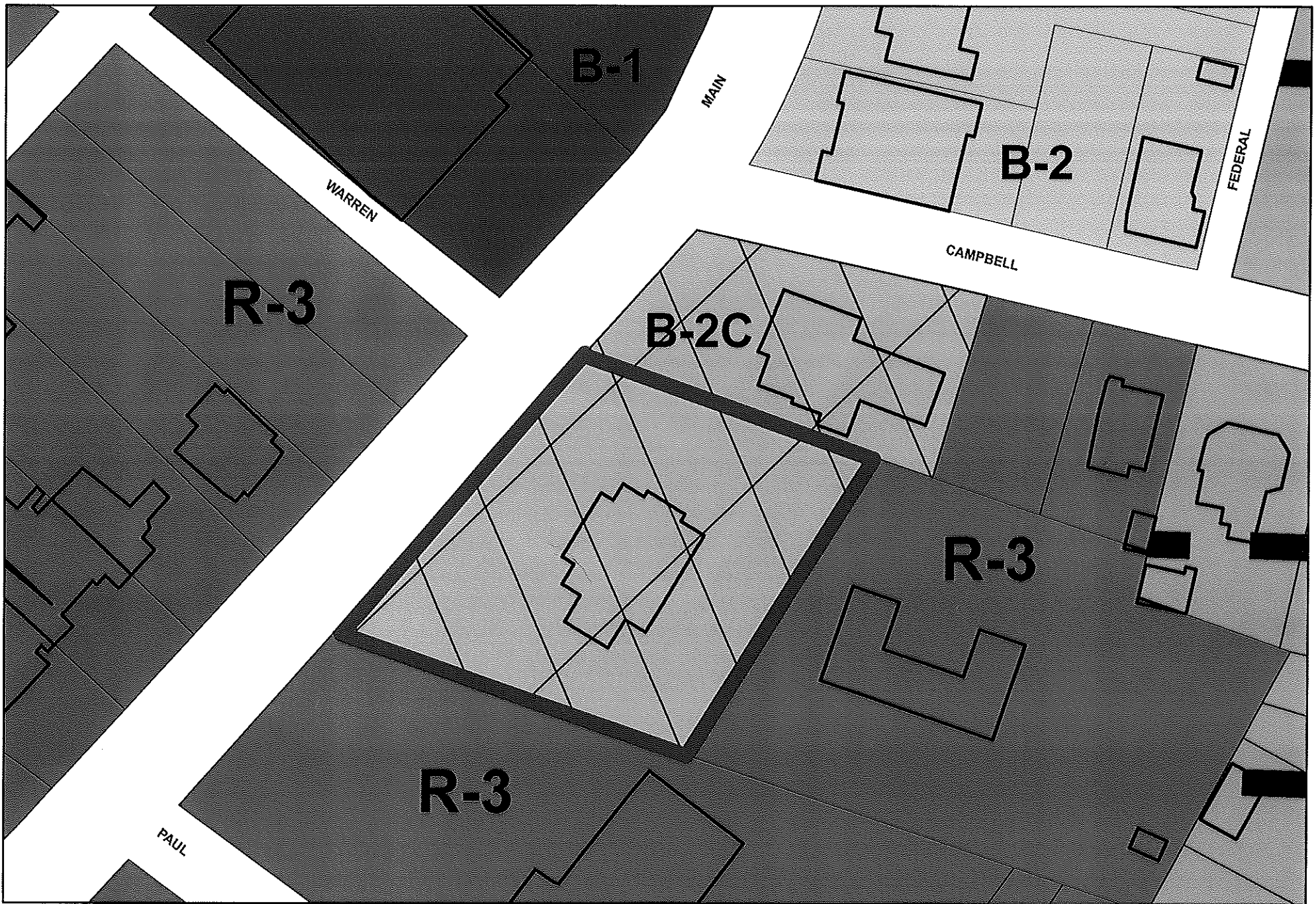
Tax Map: 26-O-2A

0.89 +/- acres

LOCATION MAP



Planning and Community Development
City of Harrisonburg, Virginia



Rezoning - 440 South Main Street B-2C Proffer Amendment



City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

STAFF REPORT

April 13, 2011

REZONING – 440 SOUTH MAIN STREET B-2C PROFFER AMENDMENT

GENERAL INFORMATION

Applicant: NewBridge Bank with representative Mike Jackson of Union First Market Bank
Tax Map: 26-O-2A
Acreage: 0.89 acres +/-
Location: 440 South Main Street
Request: Public hearing to consider a request to rezone 0.89 acres by amending proffers on a parcel zoned B-2C, General Business District Conditional.

LAND USE, ZONING, AND SITE CHARACTERISTICS

The Comprehensive Plan designates this area as Professional. These areas are designated for professional service oriented uses with consideration to the character of the area. These uses are found in the residential areas along major thoroughfares and adjacent to the Central Business District.

The following land uses are located on and adjacent to the property:

Site: Financial institution zoned B-2 Conditional
North: Joshua Wilton House zoned B-2 Conditional
East: Campbell Court Apartments zoned R-3
South: Harrisonburg Elks Lodge zoned R-3
West: Across South Main Street, Lindsey Funeral Home zoned R-3 and City of Harrisonburg Offices zoned B-1

EVALUATION

The applicant is requesting to rezone their B-2C, General Business District Conditional property at 440 South Main Street by amending the existing proffers. Their main interest is to modify proffers regarding signage. The property is located along the eastern side of South Main Street, between Paul Street and Campbell Street.

In June 1991, the subject property was rezoned from R-3 to B-2C. The existing proffers limit the uses of the property as well as regulate building design and layout, signage, and landscaping. Below are the existing proffers, written verbatim:

I. ACTIVITIES AND USES

Upon being conditionally rezoned this property shall be limited for use for a financial institution and professional offices as defined in the City Code.

II. BUILDING

- A. Height – Two stories above ground.
- B. Location – Fronting on South Main Street.
- C. Access – From South Main Street only.
- D. Architecture - The architecture will be colonial and compatible with the adjoining properties. The exterior of the building will be primarily brick and wood. All mechanical equipment, such as heating and cooling, will be concealed by landscaping or fences.
- E. Signs – All signs will be consistent with the colonial architecture.

III. GROUNDS

- A. Parking – Paved parking spaces as required by the City Code located primarily on the eastern and southern sides of the building as shown on the preliminary site plan.
- B. Lighting – All exterior lighting will be directional and focused within the grounds and in keeping with the traditional colonial architecture.
- C. Maintenance – The grounds and shrubbery will be professionally maintained and kept free of trash and litter.
- D. Trees and Shrubbery – As many of the existing trees as possible will be maintained as permitted by the new construction. Shrubbery will be planted as generally reflected on the preliminary site plan.

IV. SIGNAGE

- A. Although the B-2 Sign Regulation Ordinance allows a sign height of 35 feet, the sign height will not exceed 10 feet.
- B. Although the B-2 Sign Regulation Ordinance allows approximately 214 square feet of total face area on signage, the total signage face area will not exceed 125 square feet.
- C. Lighting signage will be by indirect illumination; i.e., the signage will not produce artificial light from within itself, but will be opaque and back lighted or illuminated by spotlights or floodlights that are not within the signage itself.
- D. The signage will be of traditional colonial architecture compatible with the architecture of the building as set forth in the original proposed conditions and compatible with the architecture of adjoining properties.

After the 1991 rezoning, the site was developed with a two-story, brick, colonial style building, which housed Black Diamond Bank, and met all of the proffered site development, landscaping, and sign requirements of their B-2C zoning. Since then, the use on the property has continued to be a financial institution.

Earlier this year, a representative of the bank discussed with City staff ideas for re-working the free standing sign along South Main Street. The existing sign structure is the original construction installed in April 1992 and has begun to deteriorate. The applicants would like to change the wooden, colonial structure, set atop a stone base, to a more modern looking, internally illuminated sign. The stone base would remain in place. Staff informed the applicants that the existing colonial style of the sign had been proffered in the 1991 rezoning, thus their desired sign would not be permitted. The bank then decided to amend the proffers as listed below.

I. ACTIVITIES AND USES

This property shall be limited to use for a financial institution and /or professional offices as defined in the City Code.

II. BUILDING

- A. Structure shall be two stories.
- B. Located – fronting on South Main Street.
- C. Access – from South Main Street only.
- D. Architecture is colonial constructed of brick and wood.

III. GROUNDS

- A. Parking – Paved parking spaces as required by the City Code are existing, and configured in compliance of requirements when originally constructed.
- B. Lighting – Existing lighting are directional focused on the parking area and immediate property to limit light “bleed over” onto adjacent properties.
- C. Maintenance – The grounds and shrubbery will be professionally maintained and kept free of trash and litter.
- D. Existing Trees – Maintaining the health of existing trees will be exhibited within reason. Damage due to snow/ice and other natural causes may constitute removal. This will be done only as last resort.

IV. SIGNAGE

- A. A free standing sign will be allowed that is visible from South Main Street. This sign will not exceed 10 feet in total height and 50 square feet. It will be allowed to be internally illuminated with energy efficient LED technology.
- B. A logo sign will be permitted above the front entrance on gable front. This sign shall not exceed 25 square feet and be allowed to be edge lit with energy efficient LED technology.
- C. Directional signage for customer parking and traffic control will be allowed. 4 additional small signs mounted on building surface not exceeding 2.5 square feet each with business hours and customer information will be allowed at the drive through window and by front and rear entrances into building.
- D. ATM will be allowed to have integral name brand logo sign internally lit by LED or fluorescent energy efficient technology. This sign will not exceed 3 square feet.

Staff has reviewed the new proffers and is comfortable with the proposed changes. The proffered use of a financial institution or professional offices remains the same, as do the basic requirements for the building, site layout and landscaping. The most evident proffer changes occur in the allowed signage. The applicant desires to remove the proffer regarding traditional colonial architectural signs compatible with the architecture of the building; allowing them to install a new sign similar to their other locations. The new free standing sign shall not exceed 50 square feet in face area and 10 feet in height. The total sign face area allowed for the site has been reduced from 125 square feet to 88 square feet, and signs would now be allowed to be internally illuminated. Staff has discussed with the applicant that directional signage will be permitted; however, directional signs cannot contain the bank’s logo. Staff feels the proposal is in keeping with the professional uses in the area and supports the proffer amendment request.

Proposed conditions for 0.8942 acres owned by NewBridge Bank with ownership transferring to Union First Market Bank June 2011. Address 440 South Main Street.

I. Activities and Uses.

This property shall be limited to use for a financial institution and or professional offices as defined in City Code.

II. Building.

- A. Structure shall be two stories.
- B. Located- fronting on South Main Street.
- C. Access- From South Main only
- D. Architecture is colonial constructed of brick and wood.

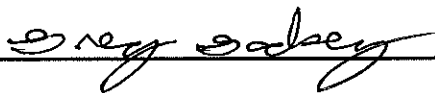
III. The Grounds.

- A. Parking- Paved parking spaces as required by the City Code are existing and configured in compliance of requirements when originally constructed.
- B. Lighting- Existing lighting are directional focused on the parking area and immediate property to limit light “bleed over” onto adjacent properties.
- C. Maintenance- The grounds and shrubbery will be professionally maintained and kept free of trash and litter.
- D. Existing Trees- Maintaining the health of existing trees will be exhibited within reason. Damage due to snow/ice and other natural causes may constitute removal. This will be done only as last resort.

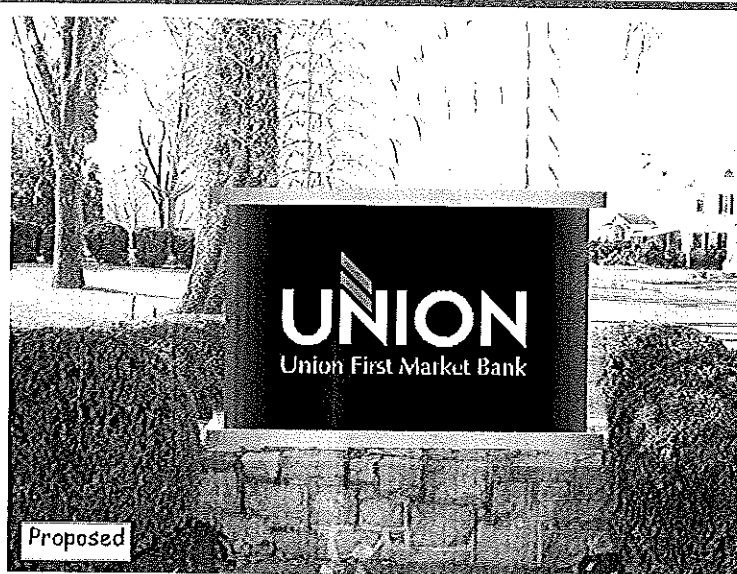
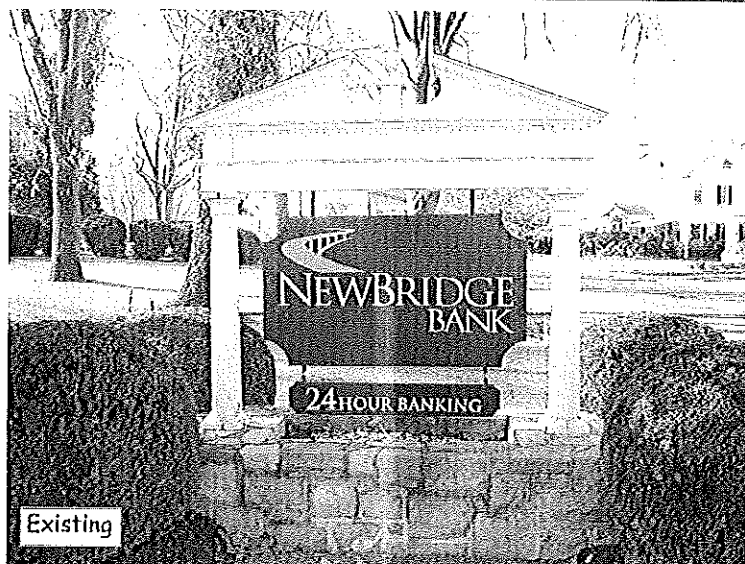
IV. **Allowable signage.**

- A. A free standing sign will be allowed that is visible from South Main Street. This sign will not exceed 10 feet in total height and 50 square feet. It will be allowed to be internally illuminated with energy efficient LED technology.
- B. A logo sign will be permitted above the front entrance on gable front. This sign shall not exceed 25 square feet and be allowed to be edge lit with energy efficient LED technology.
- C. Directional signage for customer parking and traffic control will be allowed. 4 Additional small signs mounted on building surface not exceeding 2.5 square feet each with business hours and customer information will be allowed at the drive through window and by front and rear entrances into building.
- D. ATM will be allowed to have integral name brand logo sign internally lit by LED or fluorescent energy efficient technology. This sign will not exceed 3 square feet.

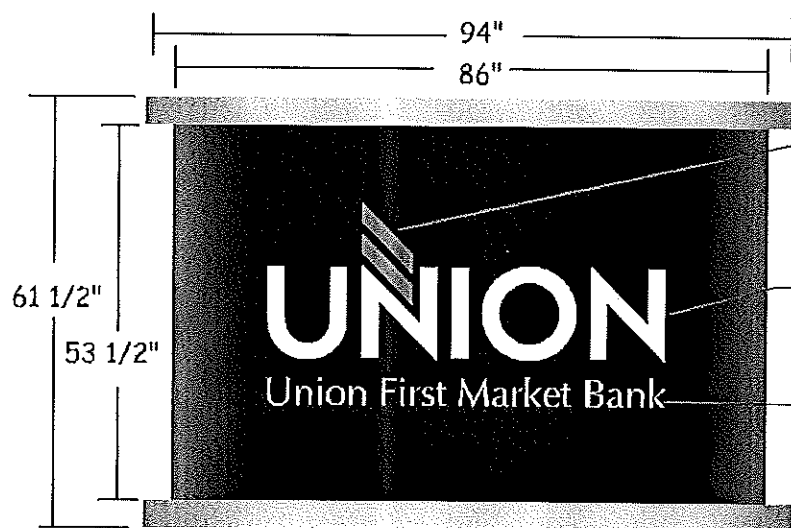
Approved:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Godsey", is written over a horizontal line.

Greg Godsey
Senior Vice President
NewBridge Bank



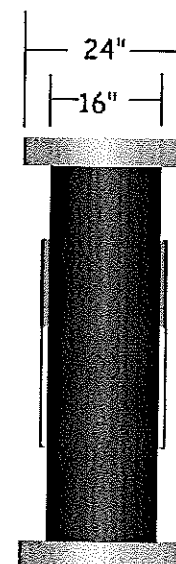
M-32 Monument - 32 square ft.



1/2" clear Push-thru with 3M Vivid Green vinyl first & second surface.

1/2" clear push-thru with 3M white translucent vinyl first & second surface.

Routed copy backed with white acrylic.



Double face externally illuminated aluminum sign cabinet with radius ends. Faces with routed copy and push-thru graphics as noted.

Sign mounts to existing brick base.

Top is removable for service.

Cabinet painted Satin Black

Top and bottom decorative elements painted 355-D2 Metallic Silver

SUPERIOR SIGN PRODUCTIONS

2510 Willis Road, Richmond, Virginia 23237
phone: 804-271-5685 fax: 804-743-9250

PRESENTATION DRAWING

Customer:
Union First Market Bank

Job Location:
Harrisonburg, Va

Date: 1-14-11

Salesperson: DWG

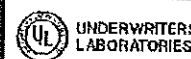
Drawn By: MLG

Type of Signage:
Externally Illuminated
Monument Sign

Scale:

File Name:
UFMB - Harrisonburg Va

Revisions:



This drawing must be approved and signed by the customer before production can begin. Any changes made after the drawing has been approved will be done at the customers expense.

This drawing is the property of Superior Sign Productions and may not be shown to anyone outside of the customers own organization. Duplication or distribution of this drawing without the written permission of Superior Sign Productions is prohibited by law and will be taken very seriously.

Customer Approval:

Date Application Received: 3-8-2011

Total Paid: _____

Application for Change of Zoning District City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

Section 1: Property Owner's Information

Name: NewBridge Bank
Street Address: 440 South Main Street Email: greg.godsey@newbridgebank.com
City/State/Zip: Harrisonburg, VA 22801
Telephone (work): 540-564-8280 (home or cellular): SE540-432-1070 (fax): SE540-432-1070

Section 2: Owner's Representative Information

Name: Union First Market Bank agent Mike Jackson
Street Address: PO Box 940 Email: mike.jackson@bankatunion.com
City/State/Zip: Ruther Glen, Va 22546
Telephone (work): 804-632-2179 (home or cellular): 804-512-8167 (fax): 804-633-1509

Section 3: Description of Property

Location (street address): 440 South Main Street
Tax Map Number: Sheet: 26 Block: 0 Lot: 2A Total Land Area (acres or square feet): 0.89
Existing Zoning District: B2C Proposed Zoning District *: B2C with amended proffers for signage
Existing Comprehensive Plan Designation: Professional

**If applying for conditional rezoning, provide a letter stating proffers on separate sheet of paper*

Section 4: Application Fee

\$325.00 plus \$25.00 per acre, and if applicable, Fees for a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) Review (see below)

- (a). Would the development from this rezoning require a Traffic Impact Analysis by VDOT?
Yes _____ No x _____

If yes, then fees must be made payable to VDOT to cover costs associated with the TIA review.

PLEASE NOTE – If a TIA is required, this application shall not be considered accepted until the TIA has been reviewed.

- (b). Would the development from this rezoning require a Traffic Impact Analysis review by the City?
Yes _____ No x _____

If yes, then an additional \$1,000.00 must be made payable to the City to cover costs associated with the TIA review.

PLEASE NOTE – If a TIA is required, this application shall not be considered accepted until the TIA has been reviewed.

Section 5: Names and Addresses of Adjacent Property Owners (Use separate sheet for additional names)

North: See attached
East: See attached
South: See attached
West: see attached

Section 6: Certification

I certify that the information contained herein is true and accurate. Signature: _____

Gregory C. Godsey, SVP
Property Owner

See Back for Items Required for Submission

ITEMS REQUIRED FOR SUBMISSION

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Completed Application	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fees Paid
<input type="checkbox"/>	Survey of Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Source Deed
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Description of Proposed Use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Proffers (if applicable)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Adjacent Property Owners	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____



**Department of Planning
and
Community Development
Division of Planning and Zoning**



MEMORANDUM

TO: Harrisonburg Planning Commission
FROM: Adam Fletcher, City Planner
RE: **Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing**
DATE: Friday, April 8, 2011

After nearly two years of work that included a great deal of discussion in multiple workshops and public input meetings, and a considerable amount of effort from all departments within the City, Planning Commission will hold the public hearing to consider adopting the 2011 Comprehensive Plan update.

There is only one change to the draft since the public input meeting on March 23rd. Staff combined the data from the Street Network and Traffic Signal Network Maps that are included within Chapter 11. Combining those maps allows an individual to easily view the City's transportation network without having to look at two maps. This means there are now only two maps from the Transportation chapter: the Street Improvement Plan Map and what is now a combined Street Network Map.

Although not officially part of the Comprehensive Plan, for your reference, at the end of the document we included the map that illustrates the parcels that the Commission recommended for a Land Use Guide change.

If there are any questions about any part of the draft Comprehensive Plan, please let us know.

409 South Main Street, Harrisonburg, Virginia, 22801

Phone: 540.432.7700

Fax: 540.432.7777

Web Site: www.harrisonburgva.gov

Executive Summary

Introduction

The City of Harrisonburg Comprehensive Plan presents a vision of what kind of community the City would like to be in the future and identifies the steps required to move toward that vision. The Plan provides information about the City's current conditions, long-term goals and objectives, and recommended implementation strategies. It addresses a wide range of issues, including land use, housing, transportation, infrastructure, the preservation of historic and natural resources, and economic development.

As a long-term guide for the community, the Plan helps City leaders make decisions about the location, scale, and quality of new development; the improvement of neighborhoods and commercial areas; the revitalization of downtown and surrounding historic areas; the extension and upgrade of roads and utilities; and the future of the City's parks, public spaces, and natural areas. The plan is adopted to set the City's growth and development policies for the next five years within a long-term planning horizon of twenty years.

This executive summary provides a brief synopsis of the Comprehensive Plan by presenting its primary recommendations: the Vision Statement & Goals, Plan Framework, Land Use Guide, and Master Transportation Plan. The reader is encouraged to refer to the complete Comprehensive Plan document to gain a full understanding of all the policies therein.

Vision Statement & Goals

The Comprehensive Plan provides an opportunity for the City to articulate its vision for the future – what kind of city it would like to be in the next twenty years and beyond. The vision guides the development of the goals, objectives, and strategies for action that make up the policies of the plan.

Vision Statement

The City of Harrisonburg presents its vision for the future as follows:

The City of Harrisonburg – where citizens are inspired to work together to create a great place to live, to raise a family, to learn, to work and to prosper.

Goals for Achieving the Vision

The City of Harrisonburg sets the following goals for achieving the vision:

- Goal 1. To improve the quality and compatibility of land use and development.
- Goal 2. To promote novel patterns of development like those developed early in the City's history – vital, well planned and well integrated mixed-housing and mixed-use urban areas of distinct character.
- Goal 3. To strengthen existing neighborhoods and promote the development of new neighborhoods that are quiet, safe, beautiful, walkable, enhance social interaction, and offer a balanced range of housing choices.

- Goal 4. To meet the current and future needs of residents for affordable housing.
- Goal 5. To provide a wide and equitably distributed range of educational opportunities for all ages.
- Goal 6. To provide a wide and equitably distributed range of arts and cultural opportunities for all ages.
- Goal 7. To celebrate the City's heritage and preserve and protect its historic resources as essential elements of the City's economic health, aesthetic character, and sense of place.
- Goal 8. To preserve and enhance the City's natural resources and encourage development that is compatible with nature.
- Goal 9. To meet the recreation needs of every citizen by providing comprehensive leisure opportunities and developing and maintaining a safe, well-distributed park and recreation system.
- Goal 10. To develop and maintain a safe and convenient transportation system serving all modes of travel, such as, automobile, pedestrian, bicycle and transit.
- Goal 11. To support a vital city with community facilities, infrastructure and services, which are efficient, cost-effective and conserving of resources.
- Goal 12. To ensure the provision of utility services to residents, businesses and customers.
- Goal 13. To ensure the public safety and encourage the provision of excellent health services for all people.
- Goal 14. To retain and enhance the City's role as the economic and tourism hub of the region, offering a variety of jobs in those sectors that enhance the City's ability to expand its economic base.
- Goal 15. To enhance and revitalize existing residential and commercial areas.
- Goal 16. To coordinate and collaborate with Rockingham County, Rockingham Memorial Hospital, James Madison University, Eastern Mennonite University, faith based organizations, and others to meet these goals.
- Goal 17. To engage all citizens to work collaboratively in planning, developing, and promoting the City as a great place.
- Goal 18. To keep this plan vital and useful by regularly reviewing its recommendations and the progress toward meeting them.

Plan Framework

The Plan Framework Map provides an overview of the main ideas and themes addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. The map highlights areas where some degree of change is encouraged or anticipated. The following table summarizes the guiding policies for each highlighted area on the map. The Plan Framework Map is found in Chapter 4.

Plan Framework Guiding Policies

Framework	Guiding Policies
City Gateways	Strengthening the City's image and attractiveness by improving entries.
Corridor Enhancement Areas	Improving the condition, character and quality of primary and secondary travel corridors.
Greenway Park System	Providing a connected system of parks and greenways.
Low Density Mixed Residential	Encouraging a mix of large and small-lot single family detached residential development areas combined with parks and green spaces.
Medium Density Mixed Residential	Encouraging a mix of small-lot single family detached and attached residential development areas combined with parks and green spaces.
Mixed Use Development Areas	Promoting planned mixed use areas offering innovative combinations of residential and business development.
Downtown Revitalization Area	Reviving downtown as the heart of the City – the civic, economic, cultural, and symbolic center of city life.
Edom Road Revitalization Area	Promoting reinvestment and sensitive redevelopment in this older commercial and industrial district.
Neighborhood Conservation Areas	Improving the quality of life in the City's mature neighborhoods to improve housing conditions, to reduce land use conflicts, and other issues.

The Comprehensive Plan contains many strategies for implementing the Plan Framework, including the development of detailed neighborhood and district plans, needed changes to the Zoning Ordinance to allow novel types of new development, revitalization incentive packages, and planned transportation and infrastructure improvements.

Land Use Guide

One of the primary functions of a comprehensive plan is to set forth a community's policies regarding the future use of land. To that end, the City has developed a Land Use Guide Map, included in Chapter 5. The City will use this map to guide its decisions regarding development proposals from the private sector, such as rezonings and special use permits. The City will also use the map for planning its own facilities and for influencing state and federal agencies to plan their facilities. The following categories of land uses are shown on the Land Use Guide Map. Both this text and the map must be consulted to understand the City's land use recommendations.

Low Density Residential

These areas consist of single family detached dwellings with a maximum density of 1 to 4 units per acre. Low density sections are found mainly in and around well established neighborhoods.

The low density residential areas are designed to maintain the existing character of neighborhoods and to provide traditional areas for home ownership.

Low Density Mixed Residential

These large undeveloped areas located at the edge of the City are planned for residential development containing a mix of large and small-lot single family detached dwellings and attractive green spaces. Planned "open space" (also known as "cluster") developments are encouraged. The intent is to allow innovative residential building types and permit creative subdivision design solutions that promote neighborhood cohesiveness, walkability, connected street grids, community green spaces, and protection of environmental resources. Such innovative residential building types as zero lot-line development and patio homes will be considered as well as other new single family residential forms. The gross density of development in these areas should be in the range of 1 to 6 dwelling units per acre.

Neighborhood Residential

These are older neighborhoods, which can be characterized by large housing units on small lots. This type of land use highlights those neighborhoods in which existing conditions dictate the need for careful consideration of the types and densities of future residential development. Infill development and redevelopment must be designed so as to be compatible with the existing character of the neighborhood.

Medium Density Residential

The medium density residential areas are designated in areas near major thoroughfares or commercial areas. Most of these areas have been developed or are approved for development of a variety of housing types such as single-family, duplex, and in special circumstances, apartments. Depending on the specific site characteristics, densities in these areas may range from 1 to 15 units per acre.

Medium Density Mixed Residential

These largely undeveloped areas continue the existing medium density character of adjacent areas, but in a different form. They are planned for small-lot single family detached and single family attached neighborhoods where green spaces are integral design features. Apartments could also be permitted under special circumstances. They should be planned communities that exhibit the same innovative features as described for the low density version of mixed residential development described above. The gross density of development in these areas should be in the range of 4 to 12 dwelling units per acre and commercial uses would be expected to have an intensity equivalent to a Floor Area Ratio of at least 0.4, although the City does not measure commercial intensity in that way.

High Density Residential

A number of areas in the City have been developed in high density residential use, mostly apartment buildings at densities ranging from 12 to 24 dwelling units per acre. Many of these existing clusters of multifamily development and adjacent areas approved or planned for such development are identified as high density residential on the Land Use Guide.

Mixed Use Development Areas

The Mixed Use Development category includes both existing and proposed new mixed use areas. Downtown is an existing area that exhibits and is planned to continue to contain a mix of land uses. The quality and character of the mix of uses in downtown should be governed by a downtown revitalization plan, as recommended in Chapter 14, Revitalization. New mixed use areas shown on the Land Use Guide map are intended to combine residential and non-residential uses in planned neighborhoods where the different uses are finely mixed instead of separated. Quality architectural design features and strategic placement of green spaces will ensure development compatibility. These areas are prime candidates for “live-work” and traditional neighborhood developments. Live-work developments combine residential and office/service uses allowing people to both live and work in the same area. Live-work spaces may be combined in the same building or on the same street. All buildings have a similar residential scale. Traditional neighborhood development permits integrated mixing of residential, retail, office and employment uses to create a neighborhood with the following characteristics:

- The design of the neighborhood allows residents to work, shop, and carry out many of life’s other activities within the neighborhood.
- A mix of land uses is provided. The proximity of uses allows residents to walk, ride a bicycle, or take transit for many trips between home, work, shopping, and school.
- A variety of housing types is provided at a range of densities, types (multifamily, townhouse, and single family), and costs. Neighborhoods are heterogeneous mixes of residences in close proximity to commercial and employment uses.
- The neighborhood includes a retail, office, employment, and/or entertainment core to provide economic and social vitality, as well as a major focus and meeting place in the community.
- The circulation system serves many modes of transportation and provides choices for alternative transportation routes. Streets, alleys, and pedestrian and bike paths connect to the surrounding area. Streets and alleys generally follow a grid pattern to provide these route choices and connections. Traffic calming techniques may be used to reduce vehicle speed and increase pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- The overall intensity of development is designed to be high enough to support transit service.
- A system of parks, open spaces; and civic, public, and institutional uses is included to create a high quality of life and civic identity for the community.
- The cluster concept is embraced so as to concentrate development in environmentally suitable areas and to preserve and protect important environmental and cultural resources.

The gross residential density in areas outside downtown should not exceed an average of 15 units per acre, though all types of residential units are permitted: single family detached, single family attached and apartments. Apartments are permitted only if single family detached and/or attached units are also provided and together cover a greater percentage of the project site. Residential densities in downtown may be higher than an average of 15 units per acre, and commercial uses would be expected to have an intensity equivalent to a Floor Area Ratio of at least 0.4, although the City does not measure commercial intensity in that way.

Commercial

Commercial uses include retail, office, wholesale, or service functions. Restaurant and lodging uses are also included. These areas are generally found along the City’s major travel corridors.

The largest concentration of commercial land use is located between E. Market Street and Reservoir Street and includes the Valley Mall, a number of shopping centers, and significant office development.

Planned Business

These areas are suitable for commercial development but need careful controls to ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses. The maintenance of functional and aesthetic integrity should be emphasized in review of applications for development and redevelopment and should address such matters as: control of access; use of service roads or reverse frontage development; landscaping and buffering; parking; setback; signage; building mass and height; and orientation in regard to aesthetic concerns.

Professional

These areas are designated for professional service oriented uses with consideration to the character of the area. These uses are found in the residential areas along major thoroughfares and adjacent to the Central Business District. Conversion of houses in these areas to office and professional service uses is permitted with appropriate attention to maintaining compatibility with adjacent residential areas in the same manner as described for Planned Business areas.

Industrial

These areas are composed of land and structures used for light and general manufacturing, wholesaling, warehousing, high-technology, research and development and related activities. They include the major existing and future employment areas of the City.

Public/Semi-Public

These lands are designated for public and semi-public use. They include lands owned or leased by the Commonwealth of Virginia, the federal government, the City of Harrisonburg, and other governmental organizations. Examples of uses included in this category are public schools, libraries, City Hall and City administrative and support facilities. City parks are included in the Conservation, Recreation and Open Space category.

Institutional

Lands designated for development by certain nonprofit and public institutional uses such as private colleges and universities, hospitals, offices of nonprofit organizations, community assembly uses and institutions that provide for the shelter and care of people.

Conservation, Recreation and Open Space

The City's parks and golf course are included in this category, as well as private open space recreation uses, such as country clubs.

Master Transportation Plan

A well planned community sets policies for land use and transportation that are coordinated. In support of the land uses recommended in the Land Use Guide and the development changes recommended by the Plan Framework Map, the Plan also incorporates a Master Transportation Plan. This plan consists of maps, tables, and other plans. The Street Improvement Plan is an important component of the overall Master Transportation Plan as it recommends improvements

to the City's transportation system. The Street Improvement Plan is listed and described in map form in Chapter 11. Improvements to the transportation system include not only road improvements, but also recommended bicycle facilities, changes in the rail system, and greenway trails.

Implementation and Periodic Review of the Plan

Preparation of a comprehensive plan is worthwhile only if the plan is used and its recommendations are implemented. This plan recommends an ambitious array of goals, objectives, and strategies for achieving its vision for the future. It should be understood that the recommendations cannot be implemented all at once. Chapter 16, however, lists strategies that the City has given high priority and should be considered for implementation in the first five years after this plan is adopted.

While recognizing that it is important to follow through on the Plan's recommendations, the City also understands that the plan is not set in stone. Circumstances change and new opportunities arise; therefore, the City pledges to review the Plan's recommendations periodically, at least once every five years, to ensure that the Plan is kept up-to-date and continues to provide useful and beneficial recommendations.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The City of Harrisonburg Comprehensive Plan presents a vision of what kind of community the City would like to be in the future and identifies the steps required to move toward that vision. The Plan provides information about the City's current conditions, long-term goals and objectives, and recommended implementation strategies. It addresses a wide range of issues, including land use, housing, transportation, infrastructure, the preservation of historic and natural resources, and economic development.

As a long-term guide for the community, the Plan helps City leaders make decisions about the location, scale, and quality of new development; the improvement of neighborhoods and commercial areas; the revitalization of downtown and surrounding historic areas; the extension and upgrade of roads and utilities; and the future of the City's parks, public spaces, and natural areas.

Known as the "City with the Planned Future," Harrisonburg has a long tradition of public planning, and this plan builds on previous comprehensive plans adopted by the City. This plan is adopted to set the City's growth and development policies for the next five years within a long-term planning horizon of twenty years. The City Council expects to consider revisions to the plan, particularly at its next review in five years. In the meantime, this plan is meant to set the City on a course toward meeting its long-term vision as articulated in detail in Chapter 2.

Value and Importance of a Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive plan is one of the most essential documents produced by a local government. The Commonwealth of Virginia requires, in Section 15.2-2223 of the State Code, that every community prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan to guide its future growth and development. This plan must be kept up to date; state law requires the planning commission to review the plan at least once every five years.

The Plan is important because it is both comprehensive and it is long term. It helps to coordinate most City activities by examining them all together at one time - a comprehensive approach. In this way, transportation is coordinated with decisions on new development, which in turn can be accommodated by planned improvements to water and sewer service. At the same time valued historic and natural resources are known and considered. Adopting and publishing a plan advertises the City's desires to others, allowing the public and the state and federal governments to know the City's development policies. A long-term view is necessary, so that short-term solutions to respond to a crisis do not preclude the City from reaching its long-term goals.

The Plan as a Guide

It is important for citizens to realize that while the Plan is important, it is only a guide. It is not a regulating document. It is not the law. Rather, it is a policy document used by the Planning Commission and the City Council to guide decisions about such issues as rezoning proposals, the location of new roads, investments in water and sewer improvements, and the development of parks. The Plan is implemented by the City through the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, the Design and Construction Standards Manual, the City Code, the Capital Improvement Program, and the annual budget.

A Community-Based Comprehensive Plan

Early in 2009, Planning Commission analyzed the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, and determined it was still relevant but that it should be modified to reflect the City's latest ideals and to adapt the Plan to the changes that have occurred since February 2004. Unlike the 2004 Comprehensive Plan update process, where the City contracted with a consultant to help with the implementation of the update, Planning Commission decided this revision should be conducted by the Commission and City staff. Planning staff collaborated with other City departments during the summer months of 2009 to update quantitative and qualitative data for Planning Commission to review. Throughout the fall and winter of 2009, Planning Commission analyzed the updated information and performed a "status check" of the Plan's goals, objectives, and strategies prior to collecting public input.

To ensure the Plan reflected the community's ideology and guide for the future, Planning Commission focused on reaching out and engaging residents by holding public input sessions once a week, for four weeks in the Spring of 2010. The sessions occurred between April 29th and May 19th 2010, from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Lucy F. Simms Center for Continuing Education. The location and schedule were strategically planned to create a neutral and welcoming environment at times when the weather is typically pleasant and while the City's colleges were still in session.

Each evening, Planning Commission wanted to collect feedback on specific information; therefore, the evenings were divided by topic and chapter. The schedule occurred as follows:

- Thursday, April 29th – Land Use and Transportation, Chapters 5, 6, & 11
- Wednesday, May 5th – Natural Resources & Community and Safety Issues, Chapters 9, 10, 12, & 13
- Thursday, May 13th – Cultural Resources & Revitalization, Chapters 7, 8, 13, & 14
- Wednesday, May 19th – Housing and Collaboration, Chapters 6, 12, & 15

Planning Commission then held several worksessions to review all of the comments collected during the public input sessions and made changes to the Plan based upon the collected information. One worksession focused exclusively on the Land Use Guide, where Planning Commission recommended multiple properties be re-designated to different land uses.

Once the Plan was in a complete draft form, Planning Commission held a public hearing on _____, where it was recommended to City Council for approval. City Council adopted the plan on _____.

Plan Organization

The layout, the delivery, and some of the information in this plan is similar, and in some cases, exactly the same as the 2004 update as the review of that information proved relevant and consistent with the City's vision. This Plan is organized for the convenience of both the general reader and those with questions about detailed recommendations in specific topic areas. For the general reader, the plan includes an Executive Summary, then this Introduction (Chapter 1) and a presentation of the City's Vision and Goals (Chapter 2). Following these opening chapters are

the more detailed elements of the plan. Chapter 3 presents data on population and income to provide the Planning Context. Chapter 4 gives the overall framework for planning in Harrisonburg through an illustrative map and text. The Plan Framework Map illustrates the City's general pattern of development and highlights areas where some degree of change is encouraged or anticipated. Following the Plan Framework are the chapters dealing with specific topic areas, referred to as "plan elements." All Plan chapters are listed below:

Chapter 1	Introduction
Chapter 2	Vision & Goals
Chapter 3	Planning Context
Chapter 4	Plan Framework
Chapter 5	Land Use & Development Quality
Chapter 6	Neighborhoods & Housing
Chapter 7	Education
Chapter 8	Arts, Culture, & Historic Resources
Chapter 9	Natural Resources
Chapter 10	Parks & Recreation
Chapter 11	Transportation
Chapter 12	Community Infrastructure, Services, Safety & Health
Chapter 13	Economic Development & Tourism
Chapter 14	Revitalization
Chapter 15	Community Engagement & Collaboration
Chapter 16	Implementation

The order in which the plan elements are presented does not imply any priority or order of importance. It is important for users of the plan to recognize that all the elements are interrelated.

Each element of the plan covered in Chapters 5–16 contains one or more long-term goals, the same goals as listed in Chapter 2, as well as more detailed objectives and strategies designed to implement the goals. The strategies are the most detailed recommendations of the plan and include specific projects, programs, initiatives, and investments that the City should undertake.

Although each individual strategy is important in achieving the vision, it is necessary to identify priorities and responsibilities for early implementation. Chapter 16, the final chapter, lists initial actions outlined in a five-year implementation program.

Chapter 2

Vision & Goals

Introduction

The preparation of the Comprehensive Plan provides an opportunity for the City to explore and articulate its vision for the future – what kind of city it would like to be in the next twenty years and beyond. This vision guides the development of the goals, objectives, and strategies for action that make up the policies of this plan. By implementing the goals, objectives and strategies, the City will move toward realizing its vision.

Vision Statement

The City of Harrisonburg presents its vision for the future as follows:

The City of Harrisonburg – where citizens are inspired to work together to create a great place to live, to raise a family, to learn, to work and to prosper.

What is such a place? It is a city of safe and beautiful neighborhoods, where neighbors socialize and residents can walk safely down the street to worship, to play in the park, to go to school or even to shop or work. These are quiet, peaceful neighborhoods, beautiful in their architecture and landscaping. They offer many housing choices so each citizen has an opportunity to live in a decent home that they can afford and that is an asset to the neighborhood.

The City of Harrisonburg will be a great place to learn. It will offer excellent schools for our children to learn all they can to reach their full potential. Our great universities will be truly integrated into city life as centers of learning and culture offering opportunities to residents to experience and participate in the arts and to continue their educations.

This will be a city proud of its heritage, both cultural and natural, saving the best of its historic buildings and areas and preserving cherished green spaces. In our ideal city of the future, the air and the water in our streams will be cleaner in 2020 than they are today.

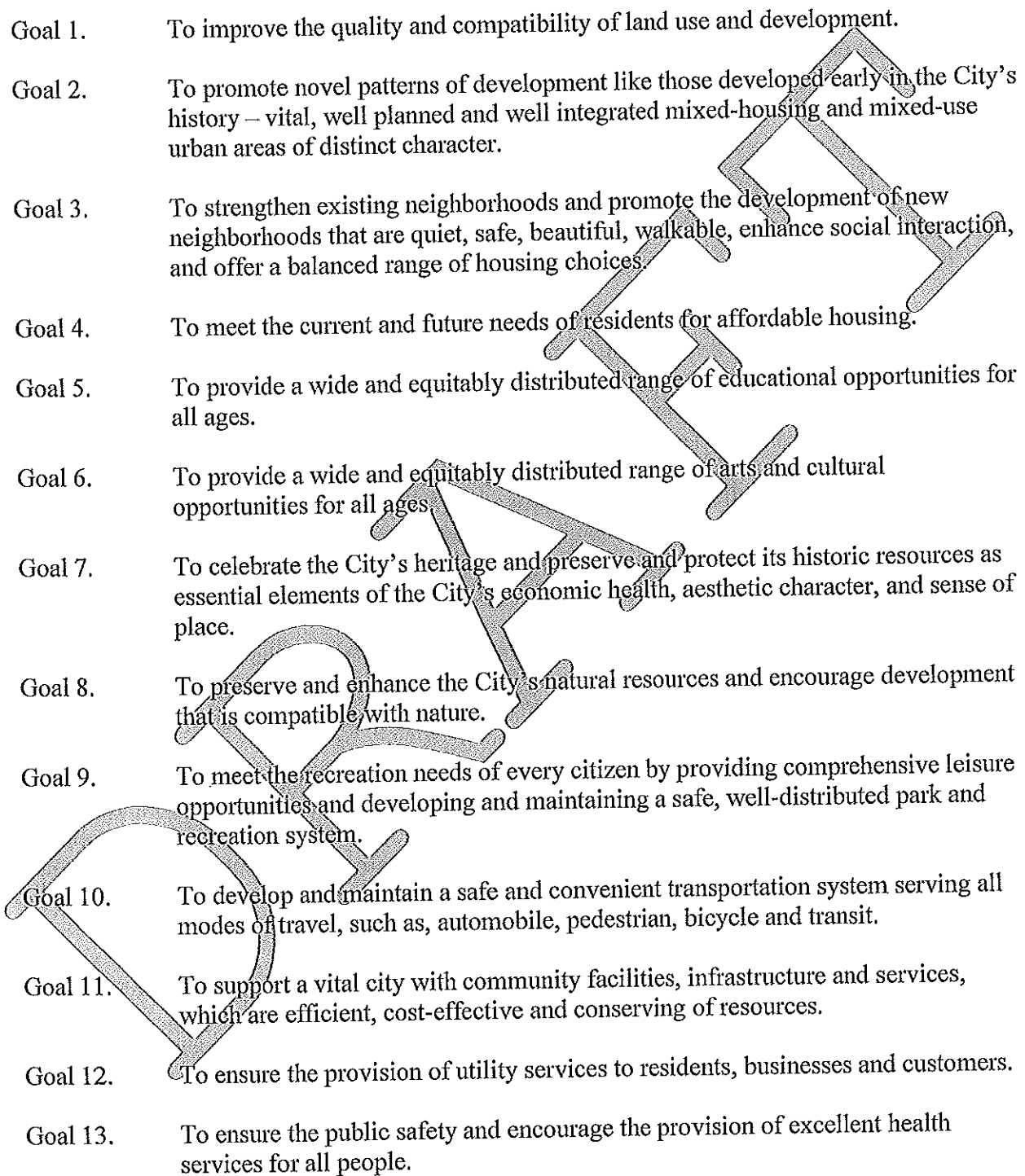
This will also be a city of efficient and effective service delivery. Clean, plentiful water will come from the tap and wastes will be handled efficiently, at low cost and in an environmentally sound manner. Transportation systems will work for citizens by offering many ways for people to get from here to there, and not just by car. The city will explore new technologies to assure the best, least costly services that conserve resources. Citizens will contribute to keeping the city working well by conserving water and energy and minimizing or recycling wastes.

Economic vitality will allow all to work and to prosper. The City of Harrisonburg will retain its place as the economic hub of the region through expansion of business opportunities. Such expansion may be achieved not only by new commercial and industrial development, but also by the revitalization of older and historic economic areas. A lively, revitalized downtown will play a central role in civic life. The commercial areas at city gateways will provide a good impression and welcome visitors and residents alike.

How will this great city be achieved? ...by engaging all its citizens to work toward the vision, by tapping into their skills and experience, and by engendering community spirit and pride.

Goals for Achieving the Vision

The City of Harrisonburg sets the following goals for the next twenty years and beyond. These goals will inspire us to action - to devise the measures and policies necessary to make this city a great place to live, to raise a family, to learn, to work and to prosper.

- 
- Goal 1. To improve the quality and compatibility of land use and development.
 - Goal 2. To promote novel patterns of development like those developed early in the City's history – vital, well planned and well integrated mixed-housing and mixed-use urban areas of distinct character.
 - Goal 3. To strengthen existing neighborhoods and promote the development of new neighborhoods that are quiet, safe, beautiful, walkable, enhance social interaction, and offer a balanced range of housing choices.
 - Goal 4. To meet the current and future needs of residents for affordable housing.
 - Goal 5. To provide a wide and equitably distributed range of educational opportunities for all ages.
 - Goal 6. To provide a wide and equitably distributed range of arts and cultural opportunities for all ages.
 - Goal 7. To celebrate the City's heritage and preserve and protect its historic resources as essential elements of the City's economic health, aesthetic character, and sense of place.
 - Goal 8. To preserve and enhance the City's natural resources and encourage development that is compatible with nature.
 - Goal 9. To meet the recreation needs of every citizen by providing comprehensive leisure opportunities and developing and maintaining a safe, well-distributed park and recreation system.
 - Goal 10. To develop and maintain a safe and convenient transportation system serving all modes of travel, such as, automobile, pedestrian, bicycle and transit.
 - Goal 11. To support a vital city with community facilities, infrastructure and services, which are efficient, cost-effective and conserving of resources.
 - Goal 12. To ensure the provision of utility services to residents, businesses and customers.
 - Goal 13. To ensure the public safety and encourage the provision of excellent health services for all people.

- Goal 14. To retain and enhance the City's role as the economic and tourism hub of the region, offering a variety of jobs in those sectors that enhance the City's ability to expand its economic base.
- Goal 15. To enhance and revitalize existing residential and commercial areas.
- Goal 16. To coordinate and collaborate with Rockingham County, Rockingham Memorial Hospital, James Madison University, Eastern Mennonite University, faith based organizations, and others to meet these goals.
- Goal 17. To engage all citizens to work collaboratively in planning, developing, and promoting the City as a great place.
- Goal 18. To keep this plan vital and useful by regularly reviewing its recommendations and the progress toward meeting them.

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Chapter 3

Planning Context

Introduction

Information on the characteristics of the City's population, population growth rate, and income levels is essential in planning for future community needs such as schools, public utilities, recreation facilities, police protection, emergency services, human services, and housing.

Chapters within the Comprehensive Plan utilize data from previous plans and from the U.S. Census Bureau and other population studies. This chapter includes information from several sources including past U.S. Census data, the U.S. Census Bureau's 2007–2009 American Community Survey (ACS), the 2010 U.S. Census of Population, and others as noted below. At the time this document was prepared, only some elements of the data from the April 2010 Census were available; thus, information from the 2000 U.S. Census is still incorporated, where necessary and applicable.

The ACS is the largest survey in the country, collecting detailed social, economic, housing, and demographic data over a three year period. This survey provides information previously collected by the decennial census long form and will eventually supply up-to-date data every year rather than once a decade. The estimates provided by the ACS represent the average characteristics of the population during the time period between January 2007 and December 2009, and therefore do not represent a single point in time.

In some instances, the U.S. Census Bureau did not supply all of the necessary information to update this chapter, and therefore, additional data is provided from the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, the Virginia Employment Commission, and others.

It is important to note that the City's population characteristics are greatly affected by the presence of two institutions of higher learning—Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) and James Madison University (JMU). The large numbers of college-aged residents within the City skew some of the City's demographic characteristics, such as age distribution and personal income. Therefore, demographic comparisons with non-college communities are not very helpful; thus this chapter focuses instead on other college communities within this general region of Virginia.

Analysis

Population Growth

In 1900, there were 3,521 people within the City. Over the next half-century the population increased slowly, but steadily. During the 1970s, the City experienced its first major modern surge of growth, with the population increasing by 34.7 percent to 19,671. This accelerated rate of growth coincided with a major increase in enrollment at JMU and continued through the 1980s, assisted by a major annexation in 1983 that added 11.4 square miles and an estimated 5,729 persons. During the 1980s, the City experienced its largest ten-year population increase, a substantial 56 percent, due mostly to the annexation. Growth continued during the 1990s, when the population increased by 31.8 percent, to a 2000 population of 40,453, according to the U.S. Census of Population. (The 40,453 population represents the "corrected" 2000 Census number.) The April 2010 U.S. Census of Population revealed continued growth for the City with a population of 48,914.

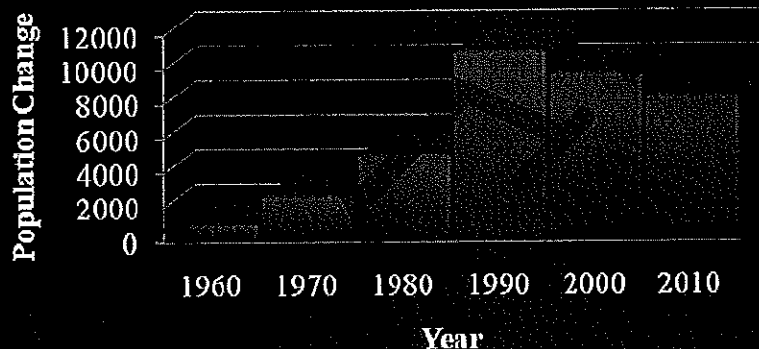
Table 3-1: Harrisonburg Population Change, 1900-2010

Year	Population	Number Change	Percent Change
1900	3,521		
1910	4,879	1,358	38.6%
1920	5,875	996	20.4%
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1960	11,916	1106	10.2%
1970	14,605	2,689	22.6%
1980	19,671	5,066	34.7%
1990	30,707	11,036*	56.1%
2000	40,453	9,761	31.8%
2010	48,914	8,446	20.9%

Source: 1991 Comprehensive Plan; U.S. Census Bureau (Includes official corrections to 2000 Census)

*Includes 5,729 persons added as a result of a 1983 annexation

Figure 3-1: Harrisonburg Population Percentage Change



Source: 1991 Comprehensive Plan; U.S. Census of Bureau (Includes official corrections to 2000 Census)

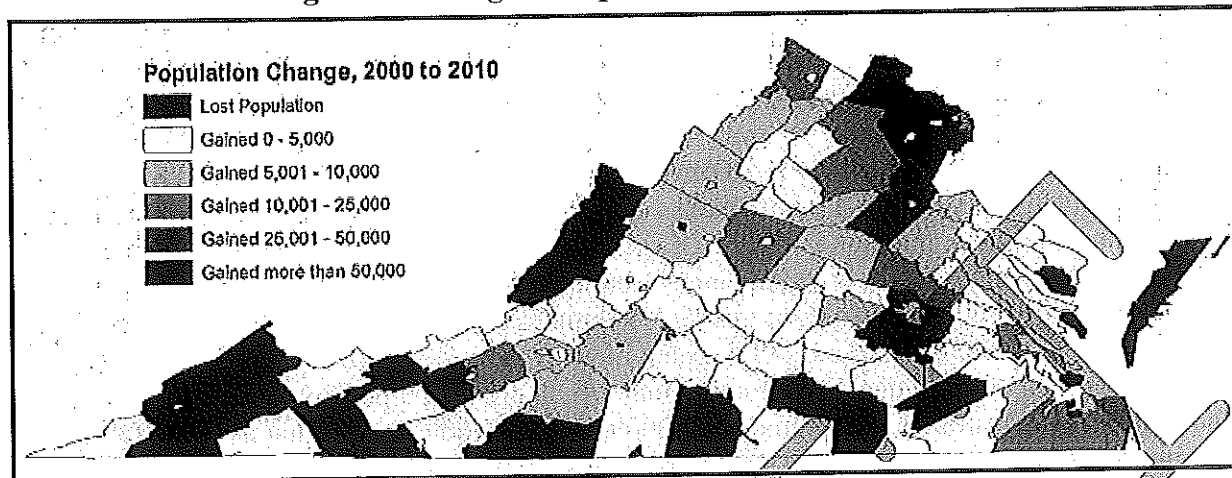
*Includes 5,729 persons added as a result of a 1983 annexation

**Table 3-2: Population Comparison
City of Harrisonburg, Rockingham County, and Virginia**

	2000 U.S. Census	2010 U.S. Census
City of Harrisonburg	40,453	48,914
Rockingham County	67,714	76,314
Virginia	7,079,030	8,001,024

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (Includes official corrections to 2000 Census)

Figure 3-2: Virginia Population Change 2000 - 2010



Source: Weldon Cooper Center

Components of Growth

Population growth within a community results from a combination of the population's natural increase (births minus deaths) and migration patterns (people entering and leaving the community). While the rate of natural increase is not generally affected by government policy, migration patterns can be influenced by housing and job opportunities within a community, which in turn are affected by local government land use, housing, and economic development policies. In the City's case, migration is also affected by the student, staff, and faculty growth of EMU and JMU. Table 3-3 below illustrates trends in the components of population growth during the decades of 1980-1990, 1990-2000, and 2000-2010. This data confirms that migration of people into the City has outpaced the natural increase in the population since the 1980-1990 decade.

Table 3-3: Harrisonburg Components of Population Change, 1980-2010

Decade	Change in Population (#)	Natural Increase (#)*	Natural Increase (%)	Migration (#)	Migration (%)
1980-1990	11,036**	678	6.1%	10,358**	93.9%
1980s without '83 annexation	5,307	678	12.7%	4,629	87.2%
1990-2000	9,761	1,180	12.1%	8,581	87.9%
2000 - 2010	8,461	2,539	6.3%	5,922	14.6%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (Includes official corrections to 2000 Census);
Virginia Department of Health, Center for Vital Statistics;

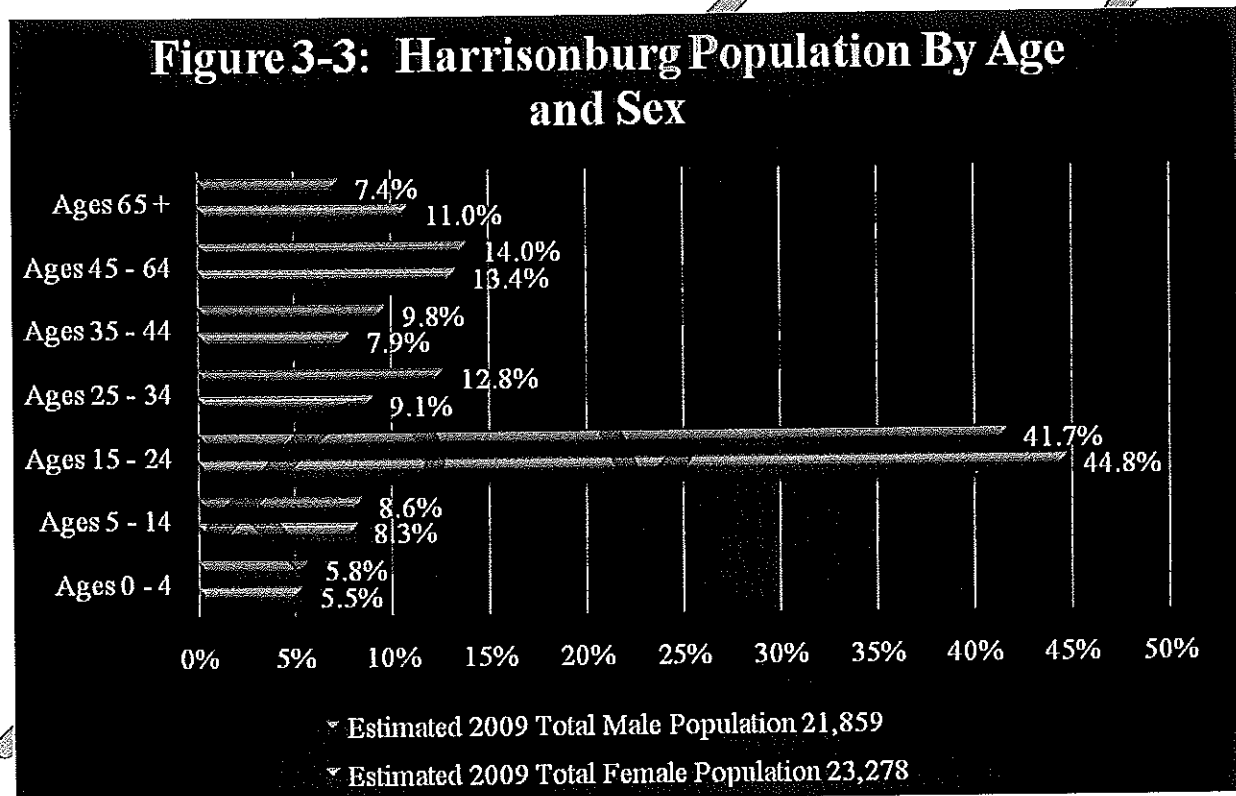
*Net of births minus deaths

**1983 annexation added 5,729 persons to the City

Population Characteristics

The U. S. Census of Population and the ACS collect information on a wide variety of population characteristics, such as age distribution, education, and income. The City's population characteristics are greatly affected by the presence of two universities within the City limits.

The City's age structure is one of the most obvious population characteristics affected by the university populations. Figure 3-3 below breaks down the age group distribution by sex. Note the large percentage of the population in the 15-24 age group, which includes most college students. The data provided within this subsection comes from the Weldon Cooper Center's 2009 estimate. The figure demonstrates there are 23,278 females and 21,859 males that live within the City limits. Males outnumber females throughout most of the age groups except the 15-24 and the 65+ age groups, where females outnumber males by more than 3 percent in both categories. Although the below numbers are estimates for 2009, it is important to note that as of the fall of 2010, just over 60 percent of the JMU student population is female.



Source: 2009 Estimate from the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service; James Madison University

According to the Weldon Cooper Center, as of 2009 the City's median age is 22.6 years compared to Rockingham County's at 39.2 years. The City is similar to Charlottesville (at 27.9 years), which is a college city.

Population Diversity

Harrisonburg, like most U.S. cities, is becoming more diverse as the country's overall diversity increases. During the past, immigrants from other countries have been drawn to the area in part by the labor needs of the poultry industry. Table 3-4 provides diversity statistics for the City

from the 1990 Census through the 2010 Census. This table also compares the City's data to Rockingham County and Virginia.

**Table 3-4: Diversity Characteristics
Harrisonburg, Rockingham County, and Virginia**

	Harrisonburg		Harrisonburg		Harrisonburg		Rockingham County	Rockingham County	Virginia	Virginia
RACE*	1990 (#)	1990 (%)	2000 (#)	2000 (%)	2010 (#)	2010 (%)	2000 (%)	2010 (%)	2000 (%)	2010 (%)
White	27,968	91	35,241	87.1%	38,371	78.4%	97.3	93.3%	73.9	68.6%
Black or African American	2,018	6.6	2,726	6.7%	3,112	6.4%	1.6	1.7%	20.4	19.4%
American Indian & Alaska Native	37	0.1	190	0.5%	n/a	n/a	0.3	n/a	0.7	n/a
Asian	469**	1.5	1,652	4.1%	1,718	3.5%	0.4	0.6%	4.3	5.5%
Native Hawaiian /Other Pacific Islander			44	0.1%	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	0.1	n/a
Some other race	215	0.7	1,725	4.3%	n/a	n/a	1.2	n/a	2.7	n/a
HISPANIC or LATINO of any race^	481	1.6	3,580	8.8%	7,665	15.7%	3.3	5.3%	4.7	7.9%

Source: 1990, 2000 U.S. Census of Population DP-1 (SF1)

2010 U.S. Census of Population (some race data was not available)

*Race alone or in combination with one or more other races listed. The race percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

**The Asian and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander categories were combined in 1990.

^The 2000 "uncorrected" population totals are used for the Hispanic or Latino of any race because the U.S. Census Bureau did not correct the counts for Hispanic origin.

As demonstrated by Table 3-4, the City's population remains predominately white, but still more diverse than Rockingham County. When one compares the City's population percentage of Hispanic/Latinos to that of the Commonwealth's, the City's percentage is almost two times the amount of Virginia's. However, the Commonwealth's population percentage of Black/African American citizens is more than three times the amount of Harrisonburg's.

When compared to the 2000 Census, the City's Hispanic/Latino population has seen the largest increase by total percentage of the total population. The Hispanic/Latino population increased by 4,085 people; this is an increase of 114 percent.

As noted above, the City has a fairly diverse population, and with that, varieties of cultures and languages are present in the school system. Based upon data from Harrisonburg City Public Schools (HCPS), in December 2010, 38 percent of students were enrolled and designated as Limited English Proficient (LEP) (Limited English Proficient and English as a Second Language, or ESL, are used synonymously). There are 49 languages represented from 47 different countries (including the U.S.), and as shown in Table 3-5 below, there are 1,713 registered LEP students out of a total school enrollment of 4,512. Spotswood elementary school has the largest LEP percentage at 61 percent while Thomas Harrison Middle School has the lowest percentage at 27 percent. The highest LEP percentage, in regard to grade level, occurs within kindergarten classes at 55 percent, whereas 20 percent of twelfth graders make up the lowest percentage of LEP students. The large numbers and percentage of LEP students throughout the school system presents major financial and operational challenges to the City's public school system.

**Table 3-5: LEP Enrollment – Harrisonburg Public Schools
Number, Percentage & Total by School and Grade
December 2010**

Grade	KES	SMES	SES	SSES	WES	SKMS	THMS	HHS	LEP Enrollment	Grade Enrollment	% LEP
K	50	42	56	35	51				234	426	55%
1	56	36	49	32	44				217	420	52%
2	52	38	43	25	29				187	358	52%
3	29	38	52	28	31				178	368	48%
4	30	25	38	18	30				141	360	39%
5						42	64		106	350	30%
6						48	49		97	333	29%
7						54	46		100	305	33%
8						41	49		90	303	30%
9								151	151	384	39%
10								86	86	340	25%
11								70	70	286	24%
12								56	56	279	20%
LEP Enrollment	217	179	238	138	185	185	208	363	1,713		
School Enrollment	448	403	388	307	386	527	764	1,289		4,512	
% LEP	48%	44%	61%	45%	48%	35%	27%	28%			38%

Source: Harrisonburg City Public Schools December 2010

KEY: KES = Keister Elementary School; SES = Spotswood Elementary School; SSES = Stone Spring Elementary School; WES = Waterman Elementary School; THMS = Thomas Harrison Middle School; HHS = Harrisonburg High School

The 2000 Census is the most recent, comprehensive data available to demonstrate foreign born residents. That information indicated that Hispanics are not the only ethnic group well-

represented in the City. The data collected includes information on the region/country of birth of the City's foreign-born population, as well as the different languages spoken in households, which provide additional details on the City's diversity. According to the 2000 Census, Harrisonburg's foreign-born population numbered 3,733 persons. Eighty-two percent of the City's foreign-born residents (3,067) were not U.S. citizens. According to the 2007 – 2009 ACS, Harrisonburg's foreign born population increased by 2,526 people for a total of 6,295 residents. Seventy-seven percent of the City's foreign born residents were not U.S. citizens.

Table 3-6 summarizes the place of birth for the City's foreign born residents using the 2000 U.S. Census data. During this time, 52 percent were from Latin America, another 27.1 percent were Asian, and 9.1 percent were Eastern European. In fact, at that time, every populated continent was represented within the City's population. Based upon the LEP data discussed and illustrated above, one can assume the statistics that represent Harrisonburg's foreign born residents has, at a minimum, remained constant.

Table 3-6: Region/Country of Birth of Foreign-Born Population Harrisonburg, 2000

Region or Country	Number of Foreign-Born Residents	Percent of Foreign-Born Residents	Percent of Total Harrisonburg Population
North Europe (U.K., Ireland, Sweden)	68	1.82%	0.17%
Western Europe (Austria, France, Germany, Netherlands)	42	1.12	0.10
Southern Europe (Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain)	30	0.80	0.07
Eastern Europe Czech. Rep., Belarus, Yugoslavia – 74 Russia – 230 Ukraine – 30	340	9.12	0.84
Asia E. Asia – 300 S. Central Asia – 365 S.E. Asia – 273 W. Asia – 75	1,013	27.14	2.50
Africa	188	5.04	0.47
Australia	8	0.21	0.02
Latin American Caribbean – 100 Central America – 1,706 South America – 133	1,939	51.94	4.80
Canada	105	2.81	0.26
TOTALS	3,733	100%	9.23%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census of Population, Summary File 3

Income: Measures of personal and family income provide an indication of the general economic well-being of the population. The latest statistics on income are provided by the ACS in Table 3-7, which indicate the City's median household, family, and per capita income for 2007 – 2009.

Statistics are also provided for comparison purposes for Rockingham County, Charlottesville, and Virginia. The City of Charlottesville is included for comparison because, as with Harrisonburg, its income statistics are affected by the college-aged population base. This demographic typically earns lower wages because they are in school and not working full time.

**Table 3-7: Income for Households, Families and Individuals
Harrisonburg, Rockingham County, Charlottesville & Virginia**

	Harrisonburg	Rockingham County	Charlottesville	Virginia
Median Household Income	\$32,384	\$49,878	\$39,414	\$60,539
Median Non-Family Household Income	\$19,470	\$27,482	\$26,357	\$38,023
Median Family Income	\$49,124	\$57,708	\$59,493	\$72,427
Per Capita Income	\$15,492	\$24,180	\$23,868	\$31,703

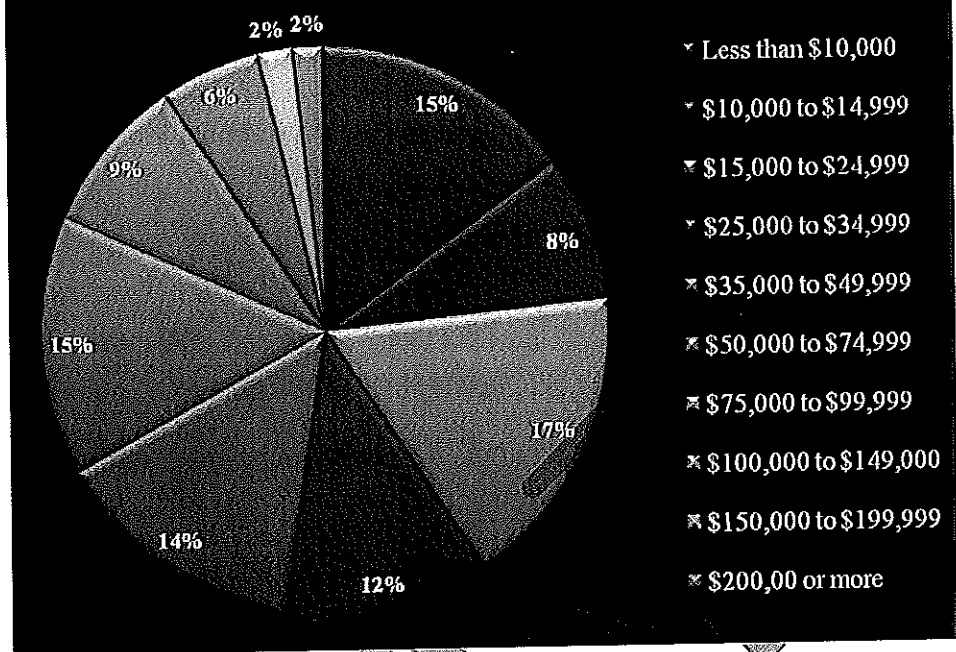
Source: 2007 – 2009 American Community Survey

The Census Bureau defines a “household” as all persons who occupy a housing unit, and a “family” as a household consisting of one or more persons who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. A non-family household in the City would include groups of college students living together in off-campus housing. Since many households consist of only one person, median household income is usually less than median family income. “Median” means that half of the households make more than this figure and half make less.

Although there is no way to quantify the exact impact of student households on the City’s median non-family household income, the presence of low wage-earning student households must have a depressing effect on this median figure. Part of the lower income may also be attributed to the presence of lower income households drawn to an urban area for convenient access to services and lower-cost housing. This table reveals that Harrisonburg’s income levels for all profiles are the lowest when compared to Rockingham County, Charlottesville, and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Figure 3-4 below demonstrates, more specifically, the City’s percentage breakdown of its household income by particular income brackets.

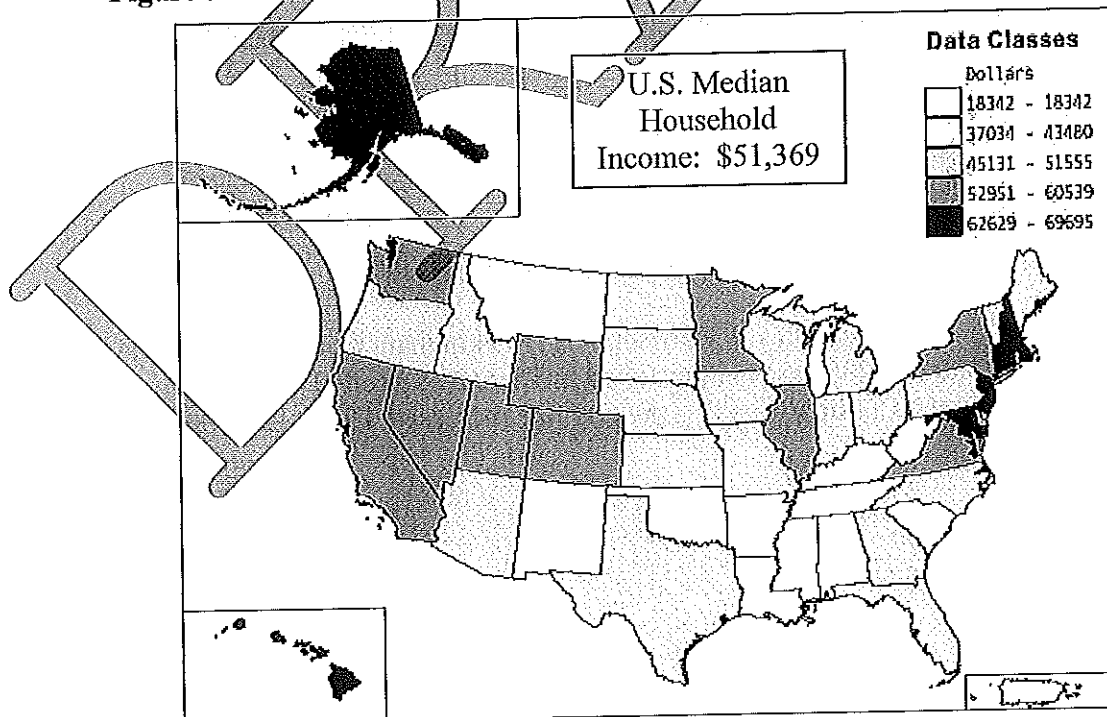
Figure 3-4: Harrisonburg Household Income Bracket Percentages



Source: 2007-2009 American Community Survey

As shown below, the Commonwealth's median household income in 2009 was higher than the U.S. median. At the same time, the City's median household income was lower than the U.S. average.

Figure 3-5: U.S. Median Household Income (In 2009 inflation adjusted dollars)



Source: 2007 - 2009 American Community Survey

Poverty: The Census Bureau uses a set of dollar income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is poor. There is only one set of "poverty thresholds" for the entire country, which is updated annually for inflation using the Consumer Price Index. The official poverty definition counts money income before taxes, excluding capital gains and noncash benefits, such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps.

Significantly for the City, poverty is not defined for people in institutional group quarters, including college dormitories. They are excluded from the information collected on poverty and are considered neither as "poor" nor as "nonpoor." Nevertheless, the presence of students and recent graduates of area colleges and universities who are living off-campus and working at entry level wages can be expected to affect the poverty statistics for non-family households within a college town.

Table 3-8 provides percentage estimates of people within the limits of the City whose income is below the poverty level. This information comes from the ACS population total of residents that are age 16 and over, which is 38,289. Notice that the City's percentages are higher than those for Rockingham County and for the Commonwealth of Virginia but similar to the City of Charlottesville's. As noted above, this can be attributed mainly to the City's college-aged demographic.

Table 3-8: Percentage of People Whose Income is Below the Poverty Level in Harrisonburg, Rockingham County, Charlottesville, and Virginia

	Harrisonburg	Rockingham County	Charlottesville	Virginia
All People	33.7%	10.3%	26.6%	10.3%
Percentage by Age				
Under 18 years	22.8%	12.8%	18.2%	13.6%
18 to 64 years	40.0%	9.7%	32.5%	9.4%
65 years and over	9.2%	9.0%	7.9%	8.7%

Source: 2007 – 2009 American Community Survey

The change in poverty levels for families in Harrisonburg, Rockingham County, Charlottesville, and Virginia between 2000 and 2009 are demonstrated in Table 3-9. While Harrisonburg, Rockingham County, and the Commonwealth's poverty rate increased, Charlottesville's decreased.

Table 3-9: Change in Family Poverty Levels – 2000 – 2009
Harrisonburg, Rockingham County, Charlottesville, and Virginia

	Percent of Families in Poverty		2000-2009 Percent Change
	2000	2009	
Harrisonburg	11.5%	15.4%	3.9%
Rockingham County	5.3%	7.0%	1.7%
Charlottesville	12.0%	8.6%	-3.4%
Virginia	7.0%	7.3%	0.3%

Source: 2000 U.S. Censuses of Population; 2007 – 2009 American Community Survey

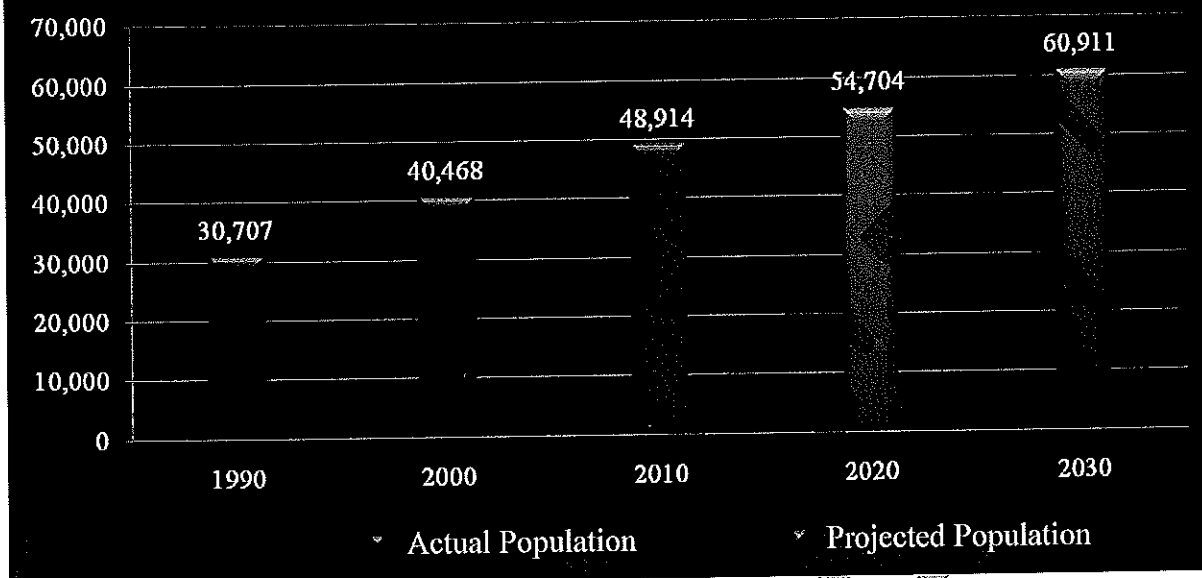
Population Projections

Population projections are often included in planning reports to help guide future plans for public services and facilities. There are many different ways to project future population, and all of them involve a high degree of uncertainty. Variables such as economic growth rates, birth and migration rates, and the enrollment growth rates of JMU and EMU are subject to change from year to year and will greatly affect the accuracy of population projections. It is also important to realize that the rate and distribution of future population growth in the City can be affected in a significant way by the land use policies of the City and surrounding jurisdictions. Population projections should be considered merely as a snapshot of how much the City might grow based on past growth trends. As such, they can allow the City to examine whether or not the continuation of past trends is desirable and how current land use policies might be altered to affect these trends and to move the City toward its preferred future.

The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) regularly provides populations projections for localities throughout the State. Historically, the VEC's projections for the City have been low. Their late 1990s projection for the City's 2000 population was significantly lower than what the 2000 Census actually determined. Prior to the release of the 2010 Census, VEC projected the City would be at 45,794 in 2010, 51,215 in 2020, and 57,026 in 2030. Similar to past projections, VEC's 2010 population projection was less than the 2010 Census. Since the release of the 2010 Census, VEC has not provided an updated population forecast.

The data in Figure 3-6 below was generated by using the estimated growth rate that VEC used in their last projection for the City, which included roughly 11.8 percent growth from 2010 to 2020 and about 11.3 percent growth from 2020 to 2030. These population projections are the same projections used to determine the Urban Development Areas as described in Chapter 5 and as illustrated on the Land Use Guide map included at the end of that chapter.

Figure 3-6: Harrisonburg Actual and Projected Population



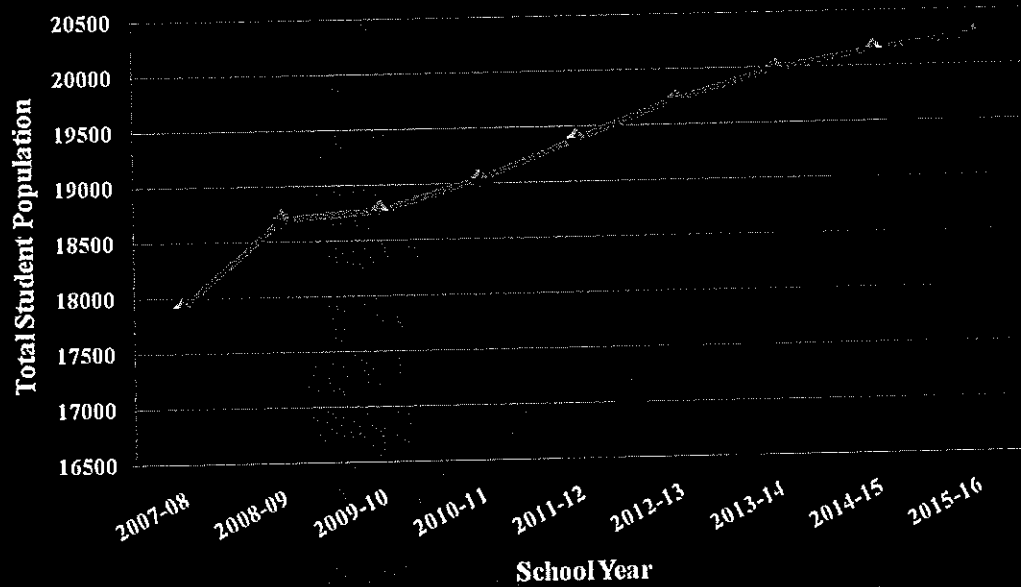
Harrisonburg's population figures include students from both universities in the City. This student population plays a significant role in the City as many of our services, infrastructure needs, business needs, and recreation and other necessities are impacted by that demographic. As such, when developing City population projections, consideration has been given to the projections for student enrollments at the universities. Eastern Mennonite University, with an enrollment of approximately 1,600 students, is not projected to experience significant growth in the foreseeable future. The information shown in Table 3-10 and visually depicted in Figure 3-7 was provided by the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV), and presents JMU's projected enrollment trends for all students for the listed years. While considering these projections, it should be known that JMU's actual fall 2010 enrollment totaled 19,434 students.

Table 3-10: JMU Fall Headcount Enrollment, On/Off Campus, All Students

	Actual		Projections						
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
In-State	12,678	13,355	13,510	13,744	14,114	14,449	14,711	14,871	14,989
Out-of-State	5,240	5,350	5,261	5,301	5,277	5,281	5,285	5,285	5,285
Total	17,918	18,705	18,771	19,045	19,391	19,730	19,996	20,156	20,274

Source: State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

Figure 3-7: JMU Total Student Population Projections



Source: State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

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Chapter 4

Plan Framework

Introduction

The Plan Framework Map provides an overview of the main ideas and themes to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. The map highlights areas where some degree of change is encouraged or anticipated. Table 4-1 summarizes the guiding policies for each highlighted area on the map. The map is provided at the end of this chapter.

Table 4-1: Plan Framework Guiding Policies

Framework	Guiding Policies
City Gateways	Strengthening the City's image and attractiveness by improving entries.
Corridor Enhancement Areas	Improving the condition, character and quality of primary and secondary travel corridors.
Greenway Park System	Providing a connected system of parks and greenways.
Low Density Mixed Residential	Encouraging a mix of large and small-lot single family detached residential development areas combined with parks and green spaces.
Medium Density Mixed Residential	Encouraging a mix of small-lot single-family detached and attached residential development areas combined with parks and green spaces.
Mixed Use Development Areas	Promoting planned mixed use areas offering innovative combinations of residential and business development.
Downtown Revitalization Area	Reviving downtown as the heart of the City – the civic, economic, cultural, and symbolic center of city life.
Edom Road Revitalization Area	Promoting reinvestment and sensitive redevelopment in this older commercial and industrial district.
Neighborhood Conservation Areas	Improving the quality of life in the City's mature neighborhoods.

This chapter further elaborates on the guiding policies provided above and addresses each area identified on the Plan Framework Map. The chapters following this one, particularly Chapter 5, provide the detailed goals, objectives and strategies that will guide the City in the implementation of the framework plan policies in this chapter.

City Gateways

The Framework Map identifies the City's primary and secondary gateways—selected areas where the regional road network crosses a City boundary. Primary gateways are identified at the City's interstate interchanges. Secondary gateways are found at major secondary road corridor entrances, the entrances for Route 33 (Market Street), Route 11 (Main Street), Route 42 (High Street and Virginia Avenue), Route 659 (Port Republic Road), Route 710 (Reservoir Street), and Route 726 (Erickson Avenue and Stone Spring Road). These gateways serve as the community's front door, establishing first impressions and reinforcing images and perceptions of Harrisonburg's character, quality of life and vitality. The City should prepare an evaluation of the visual quality and entry experience at each gateway and plan for appropriate improvements. Such improvements

could include updated entry signage, landscape plantings, screening of unsightly views, and new development and redevelopment recommendations.

Corridor Enhancement Areas

The Plan Framework Map highlights the important local and regional travel routes into and through the City, many of which are commercial destinations. Their quality and character strongly influence the City's accessibility, attractiveness and economic vitality. This plan recommends that a special study of each of these corridors be carried out to address such issues as:

- Land use and design quality
- Streetscape improvements
- Vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle circulation
- Access management
- Development, redevelopment and reuse opportunities
- Conservation of special features
- Improvements to utilities and public facilities, and
- Signage.

Some of these corridors include residential areas, which may be under stress due to increased traffic along the corridor. It is particularly important that the corridor studies examine whether these areas should remain residential or be permitted to convert to non-residential uses on a location-specific basis. Conversion to non-residential uses can result in building improvements along the corridor. On the other hand, continuous strips of retail and/or office uses can cause access management problems, with many commercial driveways causing dangerous traffic situations. Another consideration regarding conversion to non-residential use is the resultant expansion of the supply of potential retail/office sites in the City. If the demand is not high enough, the result may be spotty conversions that further destabilize the neighborhood. In some cases, existing residential areas along corridors can be improved by the installation of street trees and landscaping that buffer the houses from the road and by traffic calming measures. A mix of residential and non-residential uses may also be appropriate, if the best sites for conversion are identified in the corridor plan, and if design standards are applied to mitigate adverse impacts of non-residential uses on neighboring residential uses and on traffic safety.

Greenway Park System

This network of green spaces serves both recreational and environmental functions along with being an alternative means of transportation. It preserves vital elements of nature in the City – the streams, floodplains, and unique wooded sites. These ribbons of green could connect the City's parks with sidewalks and bicycle and/or shared-use paths and linear open spaces, providing protection from flooding, visual relief from urban development and an attractive recreational environment. The goal of the City is to preserve the environmental and recreational values of these lands through enlightened conservation practices on its own lands and cooperative efforts with private landowners. The latter might include the purchase, acceptance of donation, and suggestion of proffers of land and easements from willing participants. Some of the concepts of this system are similar to the City's adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan ideals.

Mixed Residential Areas

This plan proposes some new patterns of residential development for several remaining large undeveloped and some underdeveloped areas of the City – planned mixed residential. Two types of mixed residential use are proposed, low density and medium density, as described below:

Low Density Mixed Residential

These areas identified on the Plan Framework Map and located at the edge of the City are planned for residential development containing a mix of large and small-lot single family detached dwellings and attractive green spaces. Planned “open space” (also known as “cluster”) developments are desired. The City encourages innovative residential building types that permit creative subdivision design solutions for neighborhood cohesiveness, walkability, connected street grids, community green spaces, and protection of environmental resources. Examples of such innovative residential building types could include zero lot-line development and patio homes as well as other new single family residential forms. The gross density of development in these areas should be in the range of 1 to 6 dwelling units per acre.

Medium Density Mixed Residential

These largely undeveloped areas continue the existing medium density character of adjacent areas, but in a different form. They are planned for small-lot single family detached and single family attached neighborhoods where green spaces are integral design features. They should be planned communities that exhibit the same innovative features as described for the low density version of mixed residential development described above. The gross density of development in these areas should be in the range of 4 to 12 dwelling units per acre and commercial uses would be expected to have an intensity equivalent to a Floor Area Ratio of at least 0.4, although the City does not measure commercial intensity in that way.

Mixed Use Development Areas

These areas combine residential and non-residential uses in planned neighborhoods where the different uses are finely mixed instead of separated. Quality architectural design features and strategic placement of green spaces will ensure development compatibility. These areas are prime candidates for “live-work” and traditional neighborhood developments. Live-work developments combine residential and office/service uses allowing people to both live and work in the same area. Live-work spaces may be combined in the same building or on the same street. All buildings have a similar residential scale.

Traditional neighborhood development permits integrated mixing of residential, retail, office and employment uses to create a neighborhood with the following characteristics:

- The design of the neighborhood allows residents to work, shop, and carry out many of life’s other activities within the neighborhood.

- A mix of land uses is provided. The proximity of uses allows residents to walk, ride a bicycle, or take transit for many trips between home, work, shopping, and school.
- A variety of housing types is provided at a range of densities, types (multifamily, townhouse, and single family), and costs. Neighborhoods are heterogeneous mixes of residences in close proximity to commercial and employment uses.
- The neighborhood includes a retail, office, employment, and/or entertainment core to provide economic and social vitality, as well as a major focus and meeting place in the community. The core area may contain high density residential uses as well, particularly in the form of multifamily units on the upper floors of buildings over retail or office uses.
- Architectural, landscape and/or other design measures are employed to ensure compatibility between the different uses.
- The circulation system serves many modes of transportation and provides choices for alternative transportation routes. Streets, alleys, and pedestrian and bicycle paths connect to the surrounding area. Streets and alleys generally follow a grid pattern to provide these route choices and connections. Traffic calming techniques may be used to reduce vehicle speed and increase pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- The overall intensity of development is designed to be high enough to support transit service.
- A system of parks; open spaces; and civic, public, and institutional uses is included to create a high quality of life and civic identity for the community.
- The cluster concept is embraced so as to concentrate development in environmentally suitable areas and to preserve and protect important environmental and cultural resources.

Live-work areas should include most of the qualities of traditional neighborhood developments except that a concentrated core area is not required, the retail component is very minor, and residential-scale office uses may be more finely mixed with residential uses. Live-work development is recommended for the following mixed use development area shown on the Plan Framework Map:

- The area north of Country Club Road, east of I-81, and west of Linda Lane.

Traditional neighborhood development is recommended for the following mixed use areas shown on the Plan Framework Map:

- The area west of I-81 bounded by Old Furnace Road, Smithland Road and I-81, and
- the area between Long Avenue and Hawkins Street south of East Market Street.

The City will be flexible in applying the above location recommendations for the types of mixed use areas. The City may permit a live-work development in a recommended traditional neighborhood development area and vice versa, if the proposed plan exhibits excellent design qualities and is compatible with neighboring areas.

Apartments are permitted only if single family detached and attached units are also provided and together cover a greater percentage of the project site.

Revitalization Areas

The following areas of the City are already developed, but have experienced some symptoms of decline. Revitalization and selected redevelopment, according to thoughtful detailed plans, are needed to ensure that these areas remain assets to the City, property owners, businesses, and residents.

Downtown Revitalization Area

In concert with Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance, the City of Harrisonburg seeks to revive downtown as the heart of the City and region, an economic engine, source of civic pride, arts and entertainment center, and quality place to shop, work and live. The boundaries of the downtown area coincide with the City's identified Arts & Cultural District and include the central business core, portions of the James Madison University Campus, and transitional mixed use/residential areas that connect downtown to surrounding neighborhoods. Court Square is the historic and symbolic center; a quarter mile radius from the center of the square defines the area within easy walking distance. The Virginia Main Street approach to revitalizing downtown forms the core principles for improving the area and focuses on organization, design, promotion and economic restructuring. In regard to design, the City will work with Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance to guide the rehabilitation and development of the area including the appropriate densities, intensity and character of downtown. Further guidance on the revitalization of downtown is provided in Chapter 14.

Edom Road Revitalization Area










The City seeks to create a redevelopment and revitalization plan for this area located next to downtown, an area that currently exhibits low quality and deteriorating building stock and conflicting land uses. The goal is to encourage reinvestment and to seek coordinated redevelopment of the area transforming it into an attractive and vital City asset. See Chapter 14 for additional guidance.

Neighborhood Conservation Areas

Although many are rich in historic and cultural fabric, some neighborhoods face challenges to reinvestment and rehabilitation while others confront preservation issues. Some are suffering from poorly maintained, deteriorating, or vacant homes and spot conversions of single family homes to apartments, often for students. Other areas contain older deteriorating apartment buildings. Some are affected by encroaching commercial development or inappropriate conversion of houses to non-residential uses. Impacts of traffic on highly traveled roadways may also be creating neighborhood stress. This plan recommends that for each of these areas a community-based neighborhood plan be developed to address these and other issues raised by the community.

Chapters 6 and 14 provide goals, objectives and strategies to guide the conservation of these existing neighborhoods.

Legend

-  EDGE CORRECTION/IMPROVEMENT AREAS
-  GREENWAY PARK SYSTEM
-  DOWNTOWN QUARTER MILE RADII
-  DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION AREAS
-  EDGE ROAD REVITALIZATION AREAS
-  LOW DENSITY MIXED RESIDENTIAL
-  MEDIUM DENSITY MIXED RESIDENTIAL
-  MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT AREAS
-  NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION



PRIMARY GATEWAY



SECONDARY GATEWAY

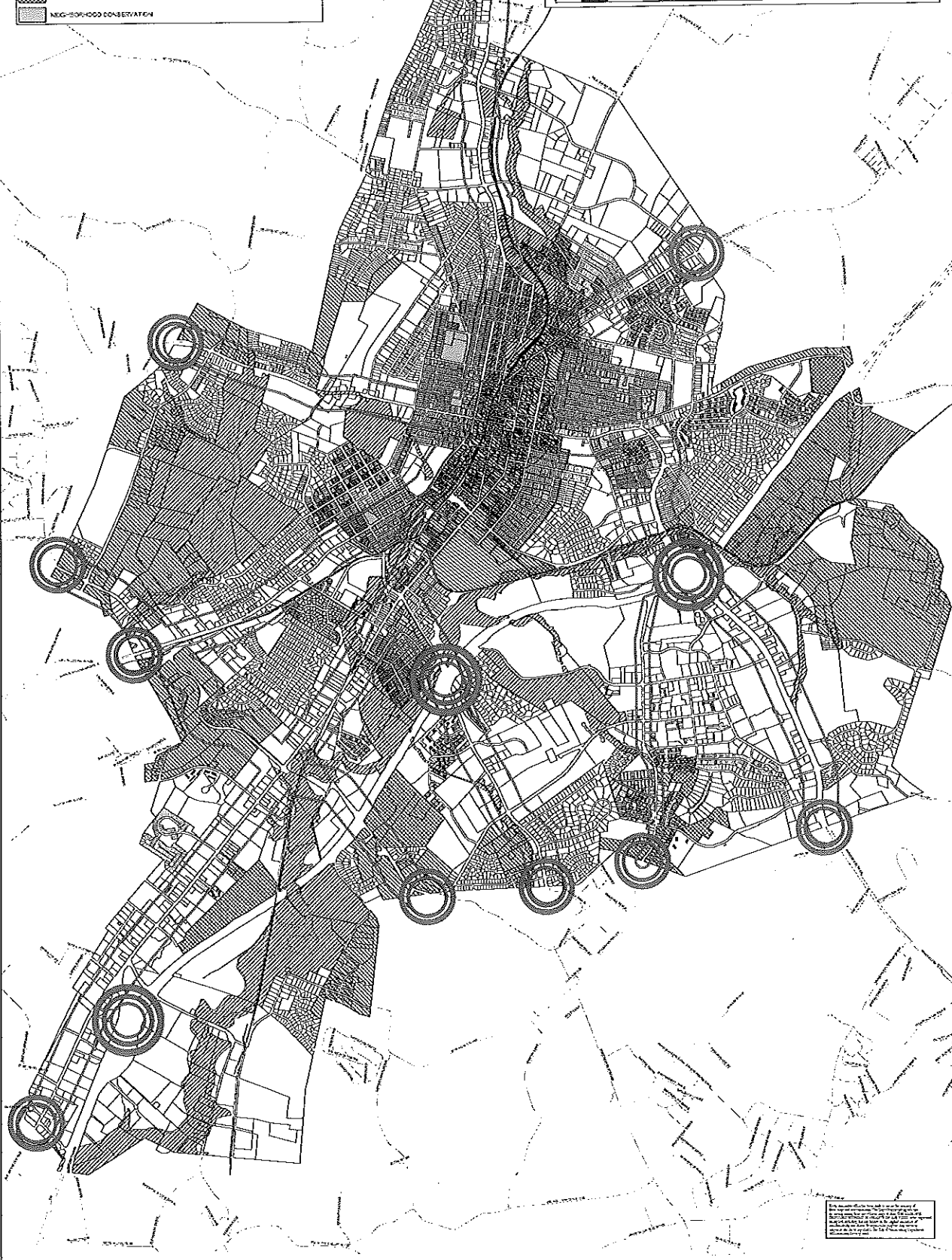
Plan Framework

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

City of Harrisonburg, VA
A Shared Vision for the Future

Draft March 2011

Map Data Provided by the City of Harrisonburg
Department of Community Development



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Chapter 5 Land Use & Development Quality

Introduction

One of the primary functions of a comprehensive plan is to set forth the community's policies regarding the future use of land and the desired quality of development. This chapter addresses these very important land use and development quality issues. While the Plan Framework element, Chapter 4, discusses where changes in land use and development character are encouraged or anticipated, this chapter makes recommendations for land use and development character throughout the City. It provides a recommended map of future land uses, the Land Use Guide, as well as detailed goals, objectives and strategies to implement the map and encourage quality development.

Background

Existing Land Use

A map of existing land use (as of Summer 2009) was prepared by linking the City's real estate assessment files to the Department of Planning and Community Development's GIS files. The City's assessors maintain data on each property in the City, including how it is currently used. This data was accessed, recategorized as necessary, and then mapped and checked. From this map, the Department of Planning and Community Development compiled statistics on the acreage in each land use category, which are depicted in the following table and pie chart.

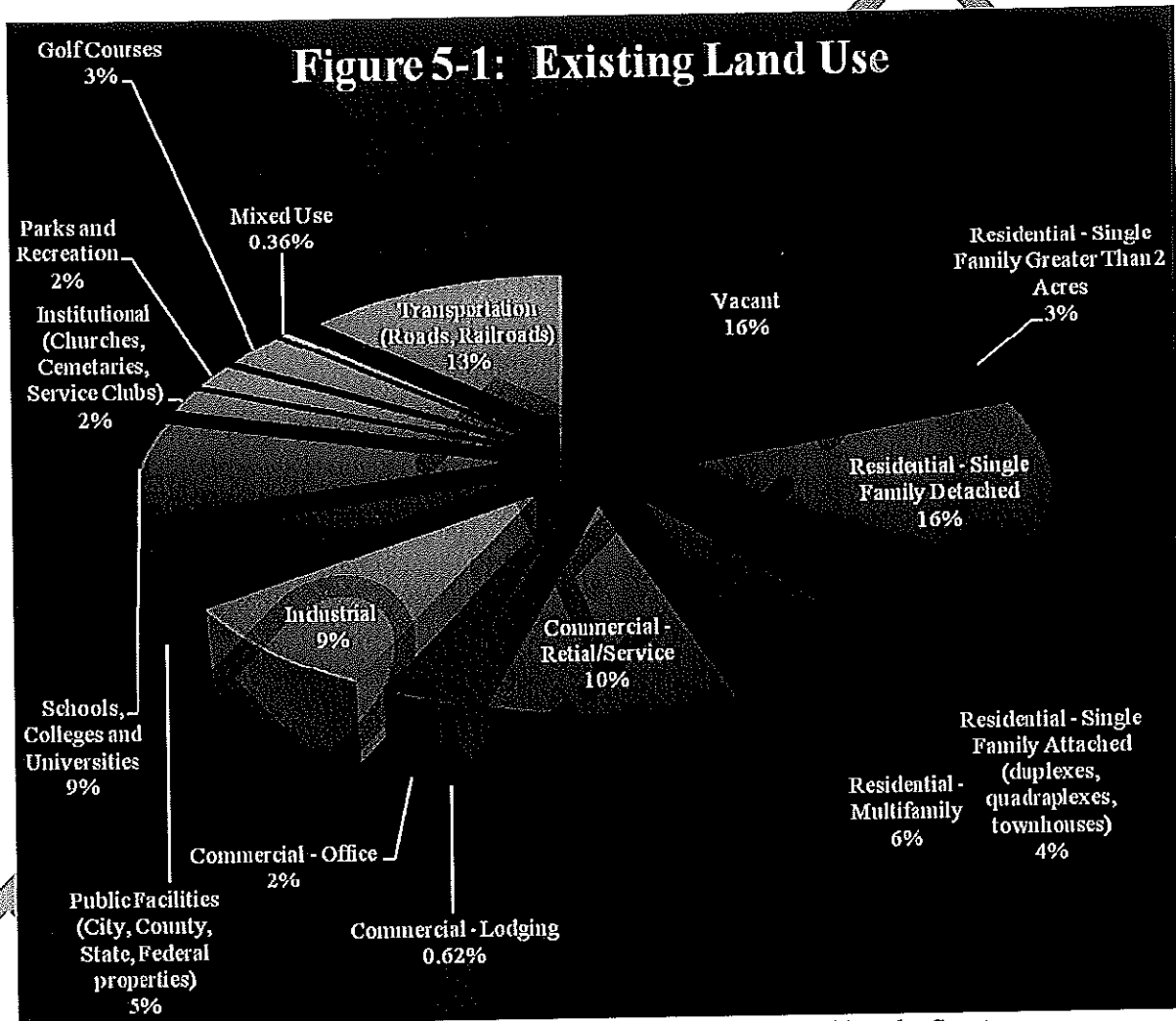
Table 5-1: Existing Land Use in the City of Harrisonburg

Land Use	Area in Acres	Percentage of City Land Area not in Roads / RR	Percentage of Total City Land Area
Vacant	1802.95	18.70%	16.20%
Residential - Single Family, Greater than 2 acres	343.09	3.56%	3.08%
Residential - Single Family Detached	1803.11	18.71%	16.20%
Residential - Single Family Attached (duplexes, quadraplexes, townhouses)	404.02	4.19%	3.63%
Residential - Multifamily	618.08	6.41%	5.55%
Commercial - Retail / Service	1066.58	11.06%	9.58%
Commercial - Lodging	68.87	0.71%	0.62%
Commercial - Office	222.38	2.31%	2.00%
Industrial	946.98	9.82%	8.51%
Public Facilities (city, county, state, federal properties)	563.13	5.84%	5.06%
Schools, Colleges and Universities	956.02	9.92%	8.59%
Institutional (churches, cemeteries, service clubs)	230.13	2.39%	2.07%
Parks and Recreation	235.67	2.44%	2.12%
Golf Courses	339.07	3.52%	3.05%
Mixed Use	39.57	0.41%	0.36%
SUBTOTAL (Land in Parcels)	9639.65	100.00 %	
Transportation (Roads, Railroads)	1488.86		13.38 %
TOTAL (Total City Area)	11128.51		100.00 %

Source: Department of Planning and Community Development

*Some parcels at the edge of the city have portions that extend into the county.
The county acreage is not included here. Data compiled in Summer 2009.

The categories of land use shown in the pie chart are self-explanatory except for the single family detached residential greater than 2 acres category. These large parcels are categorized as single-family detached residential land because they have a house on property. A number of them are large properties, farms in many cases. However, it would not be accurate to categorize these properties as entirely residential, since significant portions of the properties are not developed. These “minimally developed” properties can easily be developed more densely and are more similar to vacant land than to single family residential subdivisions. The total of vacant land and single-family land greater than 2 acres (2,146 acres) represents the remaining “developable” land in the City (22 % of the City area in parcels).



*Some parcels at the edge of the City have portions that extend into the County. The County acreage is not included here. Data compiled in Summer 2009.

Zoning

The City's Official Zoning Map determines where different types of uses are currently permitted in the City. Zoning districts are applied to both developed and vacant lands and thus determine to a great extent not only the types and locations of existing land uses, but also of future land uses. Table 5-2 provides a breakdown of the City's land area by zoning district.

The Zoning Ordinance includes several overlay districts. The Institutional Overlay District has been applied to 38.51 acres of B-2 zoned land, 1.23 acres of R-2 zoned land, and 162.33 acres of R-3 zoned land. This overlay district provides supplemental regulations for Rockingham Memorial Hospital facilities, Eastern Mennonite University, Eastern Mennonite High School, and the Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community. The Residential Professional Overlay District applies to 12.53 acres of land zoned Urban Residential. This overlay permits professional offices and mixed residential/office buildings.

Table 5-2: City Land Area by Zoning District

Zoning District	Area in Acres	Percentage of City Land Area Not in Roads / Railroads
R-1 Single Family Residential	3080.51	31.95%
R-2 Residential	942.41	9.78%
R-3 Multiple Dwelling Residential	1662.51	17.23%
R-4 Planned Unit Residential	169.69	1.76%
R-5, High Density Residential District	140.42	1.46%
R-6, Low Density Mixed Residential Planned Community District	7.61	0.08%
R-7, Medium Density Mixed Residential Planned Community District	124.57	1.29%
U-R Urban Residential	47.53	0.49%
B-1 Central Business District	92.73	0.96%
B-2 General Business District	1451.85	15.06%
M-1 General Industrial	1921.13	19.93%
TOTAL	9640.96	100.00 %

Source: Department of Planning and Community Development

* Some parcels at the edge of the City have portions that extend into the County. The County acreage is not included here. Data compiled in March 2011.

Many cities are interested to know the zoning of remaining vacant and minimally developed land. Such figures are useful for determining future growth areas and the land uses that will occur in these growth areas. Table 5-3 summarizes the zoning classification of Harrisonburg's remaining vacant and minimally developed land as of Summer 2009.

Table 5-3: Zoning Classification of Vacant and Minimally Developed Land

Zoning District	Vacant and Minimally Developed Acres
R-1 Single Family Residential	953.30
R-2 Residential	255.56
R-3 Multiple Dwelling Residential	292.01
R-4 Planned Unit Residential	13.30
R-5, High Density Residential District	129.80
R-6, Low Density Mixed Residential Planned Community District	7.61
R-7, Medium Density Mixed Residential Planned Community District	121.56
U-R Urban Residential	4.26
B-1 Central Business District	12.40
B-2 General Business District	427.34
M-1 General Industrial	475.48
TOTAL	2692.62

Source: Department of Planning and Community Development

* Some parcels at the edge of the City have portions that extend into the County. The County acreage is not included here. Data compiled in Summer 2009.

Approximately 35 percent of the remaining vacant land is zoned for single-family residential development (953 acres zoned R-1). For economic development, the City has roughly 915 acres available; almost 18 percent available for industrial development (within the M-1 district) and about 16 percent and less than 1 percent available for general business uses (within the B-2 and B-1 classifications respectively).

Planned Land Use

The Land Use Guide represents the City's policy for what it would like to be—its "land use vision." The 2004 Comprehensive Plan included a Land Use Guide (amended in 2006), which recommended future land uses. In some cases, the Land Use Guide recommended land uses different than what current zoning would allow. The 2004 Land Use Guide was similar to the 1998 Land Use Guide, however major differences were found in their recommendations for the larger undeveloped areas of the City at that time. Table 5-4 categorizes land according to the planned land uses of the 2004 (amended 2006) Land Use Guide.

Table 5-4: City Land Use As Recommended by the 2006[^] Land Use Guide

Planned Land Use	Area in Acres	Percentage of City Land Area Not in Roads / Railroads
Low Density Residential	1646.14	17.08%
Low Density Mixed Residential	698.34	7.24%
Neighborhood Residential	612.62	6.36%
Medium Density Residential	695.63	7.22%
Medium Density Mixed Residential	457.07	4.74%
High Density Residential	286.19	2.97%
Mixed Use Development	302.02	3.13%
Commercial	1431.31	14.85%
Planned Business	72.53	0.75%
Professional	83.61	0.87%
Industrial	1369.12	14.20%
Institutional	208.00	2.16%
Public / Semi-Public	983.93	10.21%
Conservation, Recreation and Open Space	793.14	8.23%
TOTAL	9639.65	100%

Source: Department of Planning and Community Development

* Some parcels at the edge of the city have portions that extend into the county.

The county acreage is included here.

[^]The Land Use Guide was amended in 2006 after the adoption of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan.

The 2011 Land Use Guide

The 2011 Land Use Guide, provided at the end of this chapter, recommends future land uses in the City. It is the official land use policy map of the Comprehensive Plan and is to be used as a guide in decisions on such matters as rezoning and special use permit proposals and the location of public facilities. Since the last Comprehensive Plan update, new zoning districts and other ordinance amendments have been established, which has allowed the land use guide and current zoning regulations to complement one another better than they have in years past. This should provide better guidance and regulations to allow developers to strive for desired land uses. The categories of land use on the map are described below.

The innovation in building types, creativity in subdivision design, variety of housing types and mixture of uses described in the residential designations and the Mixed Use Development Area are intended to offer assistance in the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of housing for all income levels, including affordable housing. The City will work with property owners, developers and others who seek to implement appropriate measures to sufficiently meet the needs of residents of all levels of income while also considering the current and future needs of the local planning district.

Low Density Residential

These areas consist of single family detached dwellings with a maximum density of 1 to 4 units per acre. Low density sections are found mainly in and around well established neighborhoods. The low density residential areas are designed to maintain the existing character of neighborhoods and to provide traditional areas for home ownership.

Low Density Mixed Residential

These large undeveloped areas located at the edge of the City are planned for residential development containing a mix of large and small-lot single family detached dwellings and attractive green spaces. Planned "open space" (also known as "cluster") developments are encouraged. The intent is to allow innovative residential building types and permit creative subdivision design solutions that promote neighborhood cohesiveness, walkability, connected street grids, community green spaces, and protection of environmental resources. Such innovative residential building types as zero lot-line development and patio homes will be considered as well as other new single family residential forms. The gross density of development in these areas should be in the range of 1 to 6 dwelling units per acre.

Neighborhood Residential

These are older neighborhoods, which can be characterized by large housing units on small lots. This type of land use highlights those neighborhoods in which existing conditions dictate the need for careful consideration of the types and densities of future residential development. Infill development and redevelopment must be designed so as to be compatible with the existing character of the neighborhood.

Medium Density Residential

The medium density residential areas are designated in areas near major thoroughfares or commercial areas. Most of these areas have been developed or are approved for development of a variety of housing types such as single-family, duplex, and in special circumstances, apartments. Depending on the specific site characteristics, densities in these areas may range from 1 to 15 units per acre.

Medium Density Mixed Residential

These largely undeveloped areas continue the existing medium density character of adjacent areas, but in a different form. They are planned for small-lot single family detached and single family attached neighborhoods where green spaces are integral design features. Apartments could also be permitted under special circumstances. They should be planned communities that exhibit the same innovative features as described for the low density version of mixed residential development described above. The gross density of development in these areas should be in the range of 4 to 12 dwelling units per acre and commercial uses would be expected to have an intensity equivalent to a Floor Area Ratio of at least 0.4, although the City does not measure commercial intensity in that way.

High Density Residential

A number of areas in the City have been developed in high density residential use, mostly apartment buildings at densities ranging from 12 to 24 dwelling units per acre. Many of these

existing clusters of multifamily development and adjacent areas approved or planned for such development are identified as high density residential on the Land Use Guide.

Mixed Use Development Areas

The Mixed Use Development category includes both existing and proposed new mixed use areas. Downtown is an existing area that exhibits and is planned to continue to contain a mix of land uses. The quality and character of the mix of uses in downtown should be governed by a downtown revitalization plan, as recommended in Chapter 14, Revitalization. New mixed use areas shown on the Land Use Guide map are intended to combine residential and non-residential uses in planned neighborhoods where the different uses are finely mixed instead of separated. Quality architectural design features and strategic placement of green spaces will ensure development compatibility. These areas are prime candidates for “live-work” and traditional neighborhood developments. Live-work developments combine residential and office/service uses allowing people to both live and work in the same area. Live-work spaces may be combined in the same building or on the same street. All buildings have a similar residential scale. Traditional neighborhood development permits integrated mixing of residential, retail, office and employment uses to create a neighborhood with the following characteristics:

- The design of the neighborhood allows residents to work, shop, and carry out many of life’s other activities within the neighborhood.
- A mix of land uses is provided. The proximity of uses allows residents to walk, ride a bicycle, or take transit for many trips between home, work, shopping, and school.
- A variety of housing types is provided at a range of densities, types (multifamily, townhouse, and single family), and costs. Neighborhoods are heterogeneous mixes of residences in close proximity to commercial and employment uses.
- The neighborhood includes a retail, office, employment, and/or entertainment core to provide economic and social vitality, as well as a major focus and meeting place in the community.
- The circulation system serves many modes of transportation and provides choices for alternative transportation routes. Streets, alleys, and pedestrian and bike paths connect to the surrounding area. Streets and alleys generally follow a grid pattern to provide these route choices and connections. Traffic calming techniques may be used to reduce vehicle speed and increase pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- The overall intensity of development is designed to be high enough to support transit service.
- A system of parks; open spaces; and civic, public, and institutional uses is included to create a high quality of life and civic identity for the community.
- The cluster concept is embraced so as to concentrate development in environmentally suitable areas and to preserve and protect important environmental and cultural resources.

The gross residential density in areas outside downtown should not exceed an average of 15 units per acre, though all types of residential units are permitted: single family detached, single family attached and apartments. Apartments are permitted only if single family detached and/or attached units are also provided and together cover a greater percentage of the project site. Residential densities in downtown may be higher than an average of 15 units per acre, and commercial uses would be expected to have an intensity equivalent to a Floor Area Ratio of at least 0.4, although the City does not measure commercial intensity in that way.

Commercial

Commercial uses include retail, office, wholesale, or service functions. Restaurant and lodging uses are also included. These areas are generally found along the City's major travel corridors. The largest concentration of commercial land use is located between E. Market Street and Reservoir Street and includes the Valley Mall, a number of shopping centers, and significant office development.

Planned Business

These areas are suitable for commercial development but need careful controls to ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses. The maintenance of functional and aesthetic integrity should be emphasized in review of applications for development and redevelopment and should address such matters as: control of access; use of service roads or reverse frontage development; landscaping and buffering; parking; setback; signage; building mass and height; and orientation in regard to aesthetic concerns.

Professional

These areas are designated for professional service oriented uses with consideration to the character of the area. These uses are found in the residential areas along major thoroughfares and adjacent to the Central Business District. Conversion of houses in these areas to office and professional service uses is permitted with appropriate attention to maintaining compatibility with adjacent residential areas in the same manner as described for Planned Business areas.

Industrial

These areas are composed of land and structures used for light and general manufacturing, wholesaling, warehousing, high-technology, research and development and related activities. They include the major existing and future employment areas of the City.

Public/Semi-Public

These lands are designated for public and semi-public use. They include lands owned or leased by the Commonwealth of Virginia, the federal government, the City of Harrisonburg, and other governmental organizations. Examples of uses included in this category are public schools, libraries, City Hall and City administrative and support facilities. City parks are included in the Conservation, Recreation and Open Space category.

Institutional

Lands designated for development by certain nonprofit and public institutional uses such as private colleges and universities, hospitals, offices of nonprofit organizations, community assembly uses and institutions that provide for the shelter and care of people.

Conservation, Recreation and Open Space

The City's parks and golf course are included in this category, as well as private open space recreation uses, such as country clubs.

Table 5-5 presents the amounts and percentages of the various land uses recommended by the 2011 Land Use Guide.

Table 5-5: City Land Use As Recommended by the 2011 Land Use Guide

Planned Land Use	Area in Acres	Percentage of City Land Area Not in Roads/Railroads
Low Density Residential	1480.14	15.35%
Low Density Mixed Residential	949.51	9.85%
Neighborhood Residential	614.58	6.37%
Medium Density Residential	645.76	6.69%
Medium Density Mixed Residential	475.83	4.94%
High Density Residential	284.12	2.95%
Mixed Use Development	209.80	2.18%
Commercial	1369.77	14.21%
Planned Business	124.89	1.30%
Professional	75.85	0.79%
Industrial	1336.05	13.86%
Institutional	194.17	2.01%
Public / Semi-Public	1099.88	11.41%
Conservation, Recreation and Open Space	780.51	8.10%
TOTAL	9640.96	100%

Source: Department of Planning and Community Development

* Some parcels at the edge of the city have portions that extend into the county. The county acreage is included here. Data Compiled in March 2011.

Urban Development Areas

§15.2-2223.1 of the Virginia Code requires the City to designate urban development areas (UDAs) that are appropriate for residential development densities equivalent to at least four single-family residences per acre, six townhouses per acre, or 12 apartment-style units per acre, and commercial development densities equivalent to at least a floor area ratio of 0.4.

These designated UDAs are shown on the Land Use Guide Map. The land use designation descriptions indicate the general density ranges that are provided within them, which reflect the City's preferred land use intensities for these areas, and are consistent with the state code requirements.

The state code requires that the UDAs be able to accommodate the projected residential and commercial growth for the next 10 to 20 years. The City is expected to add 5,790 people during the next 10 years, and 11,997 people during the next 20 years. This growth will require an estimated 2,316 to 4,799 housing units and 347,420 to 719,835 square feet of commercial space (retail and office). The areas designated as UDAs are able to accommodate this capacity of development, based upon the policies set forth in the land use guide and this chapter.

§15.2-2223.1 of the Code also requires that the Comprehensive Plan incorporate principles of traditional neighborhood design in the UDA, including pedestrian-friendly road design, interconnection of new local streets with existing local streets and roads, connectivity of road and pedestrian networks, preservation of natural areas, mixed-use neighborhoods, including mixed housing types, with affordable housing to meet the projected family income distributions of future residential growth, reduction of front and side yard building setbacks, and reduction of subdivision street widths and turning radii at subdivision street intersections. It also requires that the Plan describe any financial or other incentives for development in the UDAs. The City intends that these principles be part of the strategies set forth in this section, particularly the following:

- 1.4.4 regarding traditional neighborhood development,
- 2.1.1 regarding mixed use development,
- 2.2.1 regarding incentives for mixed residential neighborhoods,
- 2.2.2 regarding incentives for live-work neighborhoods, and
- 2.2.3 regarding incentives for traditional neighborhood development.

The following goals, objectives and strategies address the major land use changes recommended by the Plan Framework Map and the 2011 Land Use Guide as well as recommended policies to improve the design and character of new development and redevelopment.

Land Use & Development Quality Goals, Objectives & Strategies

Goal 1. To improve the quality and compatibility of land use and development.

Objective 1.1 To promote development and redevelopment that reinforces the City's unique character and sense of place.

Strategy 1.1.1 To work with citizens to identify design elements that define the City's unique character and sense of place or that would improve design quality. Administration of a community character or visual preference survey would help in this effort.

Strategy 1.1.2 To develop a set of design guidelines for new development and redevelopment based on these design elements. Such design guidelines might address such matters as:

- Landscaping
- Preservation of green space
- Preservation of historic resources
- Placement of buildings and parking lots
- Building bulk and height
- How buildings address the street
- Signage
- Lighting

Strategy 1.1.3 To incorporate appropriate elements of the design guidelines into the City's land use codes, while leaving other elements discretionary.

Objective 1.2 To ensure that the design of streets, public facilities, and other public investments reinforces the City's unique character and sense of place.

Strategy 1.2.1 To use the same process as outlined under Objective 1.1 to develop design guidelines for public development projects.

Strategy 1.2.2 To review and revise the City's street standards so as not to jeopardize VDOT funding, yet at the same time to seek to reduce street widths, incorporate traffic calming measures and/or permit low impact development design features.

Objective 1.3 To create positive images of the City through landscaping and design improvements at the City's gateways and along major travel corridors.

Strategy 1.3.1 To prepare an evaluation of the visual quality and entry experience at each gateway shown on the Plan Framework Map and plan for appropriate improvements. Such improvements could include updated entry signage, landscape plantings, screening of unsightly views, and new development and redevelopment recommendations. Improved signage from gateways to major destinations should be considered as part of gateway plans.

Strategy 1.3.2 To conduct a special study of each of the corridor enhancement areas shown on the Plan Framework Map to address such issues as:

- Land use and design quality
- Streetscape improvements
- Vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle circulation
- Access management
- Development, redevelopment and reuse opportunities
- Conservation of special features
- Improvements to utilities and public facilities
- Signage

Objective 1.4 To encourage mixed use development where different types of properties enhance and complement one another.

Strategy 1.4.1 To promote the development of mixed residential and mixed use areas as recommended on the Plan Framework Map, Land Use Guide and in the text of this plan.

Strategy 1.4.2 To develop a zoning approach to require, permit and/or provide incentives for the development of low density and medium density mixed residential neighborhoods as identified on the Plan Framework Map and Land Use Guide. Ordinance provisions would allow innovative residential building types and permit creative subdivision design solutions that promote neighborhood cohesiveness, walkability, connected street grids, community green spaces, and protection of historic and environmental resources.

- Strategy 1.4.3 To develop a zoning approach to require, permit and/or provide incentives for the development of live-work neighborhoods with characteristics similar to the mixed residential neighborhoods but with compatible residential-scale office uses permitted as well.
- Strategy 1.4.4 To develop a zoning approach to require, permit and/or provide incentives for traditional neighborhood development as described in the plan text.

Objective 1.5 To ensure that new development of residential, commercial and industrial properties will be compatible with surrounding properties.

Strategy 1.5.1 To revise the zoning ordinance to require landscape buffers, screening, or alternative architectural solutions to provide transitions between potentially incompatible land uses.

Objective 1.6 To rezone properties into conformity with the new comprehensive plan, in order to reduce incompatibility.

Strategy 1.6.1 To remove the potential for development or redevelopment of uses incompatible with their surroundings by initiating appropriate rezonings or text amendments as indicated by the Land Use Guide.

Objective 1.7 To encourage and promote aesthetically pleasing high-end residential communities.

Strategy 1.7.1 To include in the City's land use codes and manuals design provisions and performance standards to improve the design quality of all residential development. Such provisions and standards may address:

- Building setback and orientation standards that enhance social interaction.
- Street system design that promotes connectivity and addresses traffic calming measures to reduce speeding.
- Requirements for sidewalks and trails that facilitate and encourage walking and bicycle use.
- Streetscape planting requirements.
- Standards for the placement of parking areas and garages so as to avoid streetscapes dominated by parking lots and garage doors.
- Size, quality, design, character, and facilities in preserved open spaces.

Strategy 1.7.2 To require, permit and/or provide incentives for "open space" or "cluster" development so as to preserve green space within new subdivisions.

Goal 2. To promote novel patterns of development like those developed early in the City's history – vital, well planned and well integrated mixed-housing and mixed-use urban areas of distinct character.

Objective 2.1 To designate recommended mixed housing and mixed use areas.

Strategy 2.1.1 To promote the development of mixed residential and mixed use areas as recommended on the Plan Framework Map, Land Use Guide and in the text of this plan.

Objective 2.2 To adopt zoning, subdivision and other measures to promote the development of mixed-housing and mixed-use urban areas of distinct character.

Strategy 2.2.1 To develop a zoning approach to require, permit and/or provide incentives for the development of low density and medium density mixed residential neighborhoods as identified on the Plan Framework Map and Land Use Guide. Ordinance provisions would allow innovative residential building types and permit creative subdivision design solutions that promote neighborhood cohesiveness, walkability, connected street grids, community green spaces, and protection of historic and environmental resources.

Strategy 2.2.2 To develop a zoning approach to require, permit and/or provide incentives for the development of live-work neighborhoods with characteristics similar to the mixed residential neighborhoods but with compatible residential-scale office uses permitted as well.

Strategy 2.2.3 To develop a zoning approach to require, permit and/or provide incentives for traditional neighborhood development as described in the plan text.

Legend

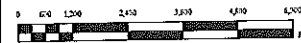
Zoning	
B-1	R-2 INSTITUTIONAL OVERLAY
B-1C	R-2C
B-2	R-3
B-2 INSTITUTIONAL OVERLAY	R-3 INSTITUTIONAL OVERLAY
B-2C	R-3C
B-2C INSTITUTIONAL OVERLAY	R-4
M-1	R-5
M-1 TECHNOLOGY	R-5C
M-1C	R-6
R-1	R-7
R-2	R-P
	U-R

Existing Zoning COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

City of Harrisonburg, VA
A Shared Vision for the Future

Draft March 2011

Map Data Provided by the City of Harrisonburg
Department of Community Development



Map Data Provided by the City of Harrisonburg
Department of Community Development

Land Use Guide COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

City of Harrisonburg, VA
A Shared Vision for the Future

Draft March 2011

Map Data Provided by the City of Harrisonburg
Department of Community Development



Legend

UDA Boundary

City Boundary

Land Use

- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- LOW DENSITY MIXED RESIDENTIAL
- NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY MIXED RESIDENTIAL
- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT AREAS
- PROGRESS ZONE
- PLANNED BUSINESS
- CONCRETE
- GENERAL INDUSTRIAL
- INSTITUTIONAL
- PUBLIC USE PUBLIC
- CONSERVATION RECREATION



Every reasonable effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of these maps and associated data. The City of Harrisonburg assumes no liability for any use of these maps or data. THE MAPS ARE PROVIDED WITHOUT WARRANTY OF ANY KIND, other than as to the accuracy of the data. The maps are intended for informational purposes only and should not be used for any other purpose. Any errors or omissions are the responsibility of the City of Harrisonburg Department of Community Development.

Chapter 6

Neighborhoods & Housing

Introduction

A major goal of this plan is to improve the livability of the City's neighborhoods. For existing neighborhoods, this may be achieved through conservation, stabilization and revitalization activities. For new neighborhoods, the City plans to provide new zoning and subdivision mechanisms to encourage attractive and vital new residential areas to be constructed.

Background

Neighborhoods

Citizens are proud of their neighborhoods and protective of them. Concerns frequently cited about neighborhoods include the appearance of neighborhoods, the low level of upkeep of some of the houses, the conversion of single family homes into rental apartments, and the turning of lawns into parking lots. It is sometimes felt that the conversion of homes into student apartments has acted as a destabilizing force, reducing property values and the livability of neighborhoods for families.

In some areas there are instances where zoning has allowed incompatible industrial or commercial uses within or adjacent to residential areas; adversely affecting the livability of the neighborhood. Traffic impacts of large new developments, such as shopping centers and apartment complexes can also affect neighborhoods.

This plan recommends that citizens be involved in efforts to conserve, stabilize, and revitalize their neighborhoods. The plan also recommends that detailed neighborhood plans be prepared to address the issues brought up by citizens and that residents of the neighborhoods be engaged to help prepare these plans.

Housing

In the past, it has been felt that large complexes of single residential types were not the best types of neighborhoods. New neighborhoods offering a mix of housing types are a better use of land to a number of citizens. Included within this plan's recommendations are revisions to the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map to allow a wider variety of single family residential housing types, to restrict the development of more large multifamily housing complexes, and to provide a more balanced range of housing choices.

The characteristics of Harrisonburg's housing stock, such as the mix of housing types, tenure, vacancy rates, age and condition, provide insight into the housing opportunities available within the City, as well as the City's general economic vitality. This information has been gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority (HRHA), and from City building permit data.

Housing Supply: According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the City's housing stock totaled 13,689 units in the year 2000 and by estimates provided by the 2007 – 2009 American Community Survey (ACS) has grown to 16,067 units. An estimate based on City building permit data, however, brings the total housing units to approximately 17,538 as of the end of 2010. Table 6-1 presents trends in the mix of housing types within the City's housing stock since 1990. Single-

family detached units currently comprise approximately 33 percent of the City's housing stock, single-family attached units (townhouses and duplexes) 25 percent, multi-family units about 40 percent, and mobile homes and other miscellaneous units make up the remaining approximately two percent. This shows an increasing shift away from single family detached units towards single family attached units.

Since 2000, there has been a decrease in the percent of the housing stock that is single family detached, and of the 3,849 new housing units permitted, 573 of them, or about 15 percent, were for single family detached dwellings; about 54 percent for duplexes and townhouses and roughly 32 percent for multi-family. Years 2007 and 2008 saw a surge in multi-family units permitted with 410 and 468 units respectively, which were the highest number of multi-family units permitted in a single year since 1989. Both the 1989 and recent surges were in response to plans for increased enrollment at James Madison University (JMU).

Table 6-1: Trends in Housing Mix, 1990-2009, Harrisonburg

Housing Unit Type	1990		2000		2010 [^]	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number [^]	Percent [^]
Single-Family Detached	4,599	42.2%	5,203	38.0%	5,776	32.9%
Duplex and Townhouse	1,700	15.6%	2,382	17.4%	4,442	25.3%
Multi-Family	4,200	38.5%	5,792	42.3%	7,008	40.0%
Mobile Homes & Other*	401	3.7	312	2.3	312	1.8%
TOTAL	10,900	100%	13,689	100%	17,538	100%

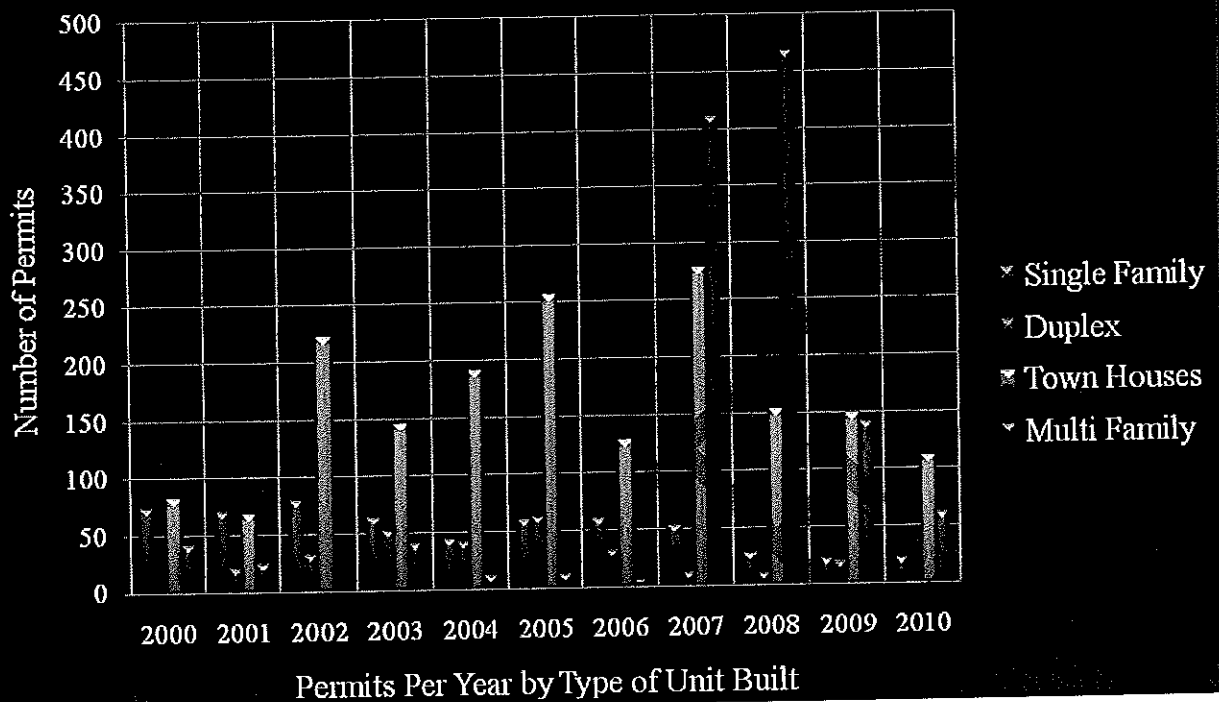
Source: 1990-2000 Censuses of Population & Housing; 2008 estimate from City Building Permit Data

* Includes 9 "Other living quarters", such as an RV.

[^]Based upon City of Harrisonburg building permit data.

Figure 6-1 illustrates building permit data for the last 11 years. Single family construction has decreased during this time period, while townhouses increased from 2002 to 2007 and multi-family units had a boom in 2007 and 2008.

Figure 6-1: Analysis of Harrisonburg Building Permit Data 2000 - 2010



Occupancy and Tenure: Table 6-2 provides 2000 Census data and 2007-2009 ACS data on the occupancy rates and tenure (units owned or rented) of the City's housing stock. The level of detail available for the vacant housing units available in the 2000 Census is not available for 2007-2009. Of the 13,689 total housing units reported by the Census within Harrisonburg as of April 2000, only about four percent were vacant. There is a trend toward a greater percentage of housing in rental vs. owner-occupied units within the City, with rental units increasing from 54.7 percent of all housing in 1990 to 61 percent and 63.2 percent in 2000 and 2007 – 2009 respectively.

**Table 6-2: Housing Occupancy and Tenure
Harrisonburg, 2000 and 2007-2009**

SUBJECT	2000		2007-2009		2000-2009 Percent Change in Numbers of Units
	#	%	#	%	
OCCUPANCY STATUS					
Total Housing Units	13,689	100%	16,067	100%	17.4%
Occupied housing units	13,133	95.9%	14,487	90.2%	10.3%
Vacant housing units	556	4.1%	1,580	9.8%	184%
TENURE					
Occupied Housing Units	13,133	100%	14,487	100%	10.3%
Owner-occupied units	5,125	39%	5,321	36.7%	3.8%
Renter-occupied units	8,008	61%	9,166	63.2%	14.5%
VACANCY STATUS					
Vacant Housing Units	556	100%	1,580	100%	184%
For rent	274	49.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A
For sale only	86	15.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rented or sold, not occupied	75	13.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A
For seasonal, recreational or occasional use	37	6.7%	N/A	N/A	N/A
For migrant workers	1	0.2%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other vacant	83	14.9%	N/A	N/A	N/A
VACANCY RATES					
		%		%	Change in Percentage
Homeowner vacancy rate		1.7%		1.7%	0%
Rental vacancy rate		3.3%		3.4%	0.1%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census and 2007-2009 American Community Survey.

There are two vacancy rates shown in Table 6-2. The homeowner vacancy rate is the proportion of vacant units for sale to the total homeowner inventory. It is determined by dividing the number of vacant for-sale units by the sum of the City's owner-occupied units and vacant for-sale units. The rental vacancy rate is the proportion of vacant rental units to the total rental housing inventory. It is found by dividing the number of vacant units for rent by the sum of the City's renter-occupied units and the number of vacant units for rent.

Student Housing: The impact of JMU and Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) student housing demands must be considered in any Harrisonburg housing study. As of the 2010-2011 academic year, JMU housed about 6,100 students in on campus residence halls, which is 35 percent of the on campus full time undergraduates. This left approximately 11,500 students to find off campus housing. In the fall of 2010, EMU housed approximately 50 percent of their 1,289 enrolled students. (EMU had a fall 2010 total enrollment of 1,537 students, which includes 248 students enrolled in their EMU at Lancaster, Pennsylvania satellite campus.)

It was previously mentioned that the numbers of permits issued for multi-family units in 2007 and 2008 were the highest since 1989. The number of townhouse units permitted was 278 in 2007 and 153 in 2008. Many townhouse units constructed are marketed almost exclusively to students, containing as many as 4 bedrooms and 4 bathrooms per unit. This increase in student rentals was largely in response to the State Council of Higher Education in Virginia's release of a projected enrollment increase at JMU of 3,800 "on campus" students between the fall of 2006 and the fall of 2013. With the number of student housing units recently constructed and under construction, there should be no problem housing those that desire off campus housing. In fact, there will be some surpluses in student housing until enrollment increases catch up with the additional housing. Furthermore, the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority's 2005 Analysis cited that "since the early 2000s, apartments catering to students have also turned to other markets, such as the emergent immigrant population who can utilize the large numbers of bedrooms in student apartments."

Housing Value and Housing Costs: Housing costs and housing values affect who can afford to live in a community; those same variables can also impact the economic health of the community. Housing costs and values also reflect the relative supply of housing and can be an indication of the desirability of the community as a place to live.

As can be seen from Table 6-3, the median value of an owner-occupied house in Harrisonburg is the second highest of all area jurisdictions listed. The value of the City's housing however, has not grown as rapidly as the value of housing in other area jurisdictions since 2000.

**Table 6-3: Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing
Harrisonburg and Area Jurisdictions 1990 through 2009**

Locality	1990	2000	2009	Percent Change 1990-2000	Percent Change 2000-2009
Harrisonburg	\$89,326	\$122,700	\$222,000	37.4%	80.9%
Charlottesville	\$85,000	\$117,800	\$288,100	38.6%	144.6%
Staunton	\$62,600	\$87,500	\$165,700	39.8%	89.4%
Waynesboro	\$67,600	\$89,300	\$172,000	32.1%	92.6%
Augusta County	\$70,200	\$110,900	\$188,200	58.0%	69.7%
Rockingham County	\$71,800	\$107,700	\$199,900	50.0%	85.6%

Source: 2004 Comprehensive Plan, 2007-2009 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau.

This relative low rate of increase in value is probably due in large part to the number of attached housing units permitted since 2000. Based on the conclusions of a 2005 HRHA housing analysis

this is attributable primarily to the increases in the number of attached housing units constructed and to the trend to develop higher priced single family housing in Rockingham County. This analysis, like its 2000 predecessor, cites a primary reason for this as a lack of attractive, appropriately zoned land in the City and the availability of more easily developed and affordable tracts within Rockingham County. Although not documented, higher development costs within the City were also noted as a contributing factor in this trend.

Existing Affordable Housing Programs: While there is a desire to increase the availability of high-end housing within the City, there still exists a need for affordable owner-occupied housing units. Harrisonburg is fortunate to have an active and successful redevelopment and housing authority in the HRHA, which has been addressing the affordable housing needs of City residents since 1955. One of the principal housing goals of HRHA during the coming years is to focus on increasing homeownership opportunities for low- and moderate-income City residents.

The authority's Local Homeownership Development Loan Program lends construction funds to non-profit organizations such as Hope Community Builders to build affordable homes to sell to moderate-income families. The authority has committed \$100,000 for this program each fiscal year since 1992. Down payment assistance to qualifying purchasers in this program is provided through forgivable loans from its Residential Mortgage Loan Program.

The authority's homeownership initiatives received a major boost in 2002 with the creation of the Valley Housing Alliance (VHA), which is a partnership of existing community housing organizations, including HRHA, Hope Community Builders, Rebuild Harrisonburg/Rockingham County, and Central Virginia Habitat for Humanity. The goal of the alliance is to collaborate on programs that promote affordable housing and diminish substandard housing conditions in the Harrisonburg/Rockingham area.

Rental Housing Costs: Rental rates increased substantially between 2000 and 2009. The Census Bureau collects data on gross rent, which is the monthly rental rate plus the average monthly cost of utilities. According to the ACS, the median gross rent increased from \$480 per month in 2000 to \$780 per month in 2007 – 2009. These same data sources also show a steady increase in the percentage of households that paid more than 35 percent of their monthly household income for rent from approximately 19 percent of households in 1990 to almost 34 percent in 2000 and just over 50 percent in 2007-2009. Keep in mind however, that these figures do include the large number of student households in the City, where parents are paying many of the rents. The HRHA 2005 Housing Analysis estimates that 72 percent of all student renter households and 53 percent of all non-student renter households had incomes under \$30,000. Although this study estimates the number of student vs. non-student renter households, there is no information provided on the rents of non-student households.

Subsidized Rental Housing: The Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority Executive Director reported that the City has 1,285 subsidized apartment units, 100 units of project based housing, 843 Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8 program), and 328 affordable apartment units built under the Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit program. According to the HRHA Executive Director, as of February 1, 2011, there are 567 persons on the waiting list for the Housing Choice Voucher Program Section 8 housing units, 38 persons waiting for the

elderly/disabled Lineweaver Annex, 28 persons for the elderly/disabled JR Polly Lineweaver complex, and 219 persons for the project based housing at Franklin Heights. Therefore, the need for affordable rental housing still exists within the area.

Summary of Housing Issues: There are a number of housing issues facing the City in the coming years. These include the continuing need for affordable rental housing, the need to improve the balance of owner- vs. renter-occupied housing and the percentage of higher end vs. subsidized housing, and a lack of suitable land for single-family detached housing development within the City.

Affordable Housing – Housing is generally defined as affordable when the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of his or her income for gross housing costs, including utilities. When the term affordable housing is used however, it usually refers to housing affordable to households falling in the low to moderate income range, with incomes at or below 80 percent of the locality's median household income. The 2005 HRHA Housing Analysis shows ethnic households make up a disproportionately large portion (54 percent) of the lower-moderate income group (in the income range between \$22,750 and \$30,500). With the growth in this segment of the population, combined with the existing waiting lists for all of HRHA's affordable housing continuing, the need for affordable rental housing persists.

Homeownership Rate – As noted, rental housing units have increasingly dominated the City's housing stock during the past several decades. The recent growth in multi-family housing aimed mainly at off campus students, the decrease in single-family detached permits issued and the fact that many of the single family attached housing units being developed are intended for use as rental properties, show that this disparity between owner and renter occupancy is still in a growth mode.

Lack of Higher Priced Housing Opportunities – Both the 2000 and 2005 HRHA studies confirmed that the majority of higher priced homes are being constructed in Rockingham County. The studies cited this was due in part to a lack of suitable single-family residential land in the City and higher development costs within the City. Remaining R-1 zoned land was reported to have topographic and limestone problems and to be on the west side of Harrisonburg, while the demand for single-family units was reported to be primarily east of I-81. Although not identified as a legally supportable strategy, the study recommended the City consider providing incentives in return for development of higher priced homes with on site amenities, and encourage the development of innovative techniques for active adult housing in the higher price range. This would provide the City with a unique marketing niche, rather than attempting to compete with the County for the larger-lot single-family home market. Marketing to empty nesters and retirees has the added advantage of attracting fewer school-aged children per household than a typical single-family home, which can further be viewed positively as these households would not place additional strain on the City's education system.

Neighborhoods & Housing Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goal 3. To strengthen existing neighborhoods and promote the development of new neighborhoods that are quiet, safe, beautiful, walkable, enhance social interaction, and offer a balanced range of housing choices.

Objective 3.1 To work with neighborhoods to identify neighborhood strengths, weaknesses and needs and to develop plans of action for neighborhood improvement.

Strategy 3.1.1 To develop a priority list of neighborhoods, for which neighborhood improvement plans will be developed, focusing first on the neighborhood conservation areas identified on the Plan Framework Map.

Strategy 3.1.2 To review the priority list annually as neighborhood plans are completed and as issues and priorities change.

Strategy 3.1.3 To develop and implement a planning approach and process that assures involvement of residents and landowners in preparing the plans for their neighborhoods (e.g., neighborhood planning task force, resident/owner input sessions, neighborhood design charrettes, etc.)

Strategy 3.1.4 To assist neighborhoods in setting up appropriate neighborhood representative organizations to assist the City and other partners in implementing neighborhood plans.

Strategy 3.1.5 To involve all appropriate City departments and programs in the neighborhood planning process to ensure a coordinated planning and implementation effort.

Strategy 3.1.6 To partner with HRHA to evaluate options available to deal with and prevent blighted properties.

Objective 3.2 To limit the conversion of single family houses into duplexes and apartments in residential neighborhoods.

Strategy 3.2.1 To review the City's ordinances for any further revisions needed to prevent or limit conversions.

Strategy 3.2.2 To develop a set of policies to limit rezonings and special use permits for conversions of single family homes into duplexes and apartments. Such policies should contain criteria regarding the locations and neighborhood and building conditions that warrant permission of conversion as well as neighborhood plan recommendations regarding conversions to rental housing.

Strategy 3.2.3 To train City staff to be vigilant in the approval of kitchen and bath additions that might lead to apartment conversions and to obtain affidavits from homeowners making such additions as to their intentions.

Strategy 3.2.4 To consider implementing a rental housing registration and/or inspection program to ensure compliance with the Building Code and

promote safe, decent and sanitary housing. Sufficient funding will need to be secured to establish this new program.

Objective 3.3 To promote well designed new neighborhoods in the furtherance of this goal.

Strategy 3.3.1 To develop a zoning approach to require, permit and/or create incentives for the development of new residential neighborhoods that contain a mix of housing types, in areas shown on the plan framework map.

Strategy 3.3.2 To include in the City's land use codes and manuals design provisions and performance standards to improve the design quality of all residential development. Such provisions and standards may address:

- Building setback and orientation standards that enhance social interaction.
- Street system design that promotes connectivity and addresses traffic calming measures to reduce speeding.
- Requirements for sidewalks and trails that facilitate and encourage walking and bicycle use.
- Streetscape planting requirements.
- Standards for the placement of parking areas and garages so as to avoid streetscapes dominated by parking lots and garage doors.
- Size, quality, design, character, and facilities for preserved open spaces.

Strategy 3.3.3 To require, permit and/or provide incentives for "open space" or "cluster" development so as to preserve green space within new subdivisions.

Objective 3.4 To develop approaches to increase the percentage of single family detached housing units to a minimum of 45 percent of the total number of housing units in the City.

Strategy 3.4.1 To approve new high density multi-family development for only select areas, as recommended in the Land Use Guide.

Strategy 3.4.2 To review and amend the Zoning Ordinance so as to increase opportunities for single family residential development affordable to households in a range of incomes. Strategy 3.4.1 and Strategy 3.4.2 might be achieved by:

- Reviewing and revising the residential zones to permit small lot and innovative forms of single family residential development as appropriate.

Objective 3.5 To consider and seek to mitigate the potential impacts of rezoning and public investment decisions on neighborhoods.

- Strategy 3.5.1 To require applicants for rezonings and special use permits to prepare and submit with their applications an impact analysis addressing such issues as: projected increase in population and demand for school facilities and other public facilities, impacts on vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle traffic and circulation, water and sewer service needs, storm water run-off quantity and quality impacts, visual impacts, impacts to historic and environmental resources, etc. The analysis should address proposed measures to mitigate impacts. The level of analysis required should reflect the size and potential impact of the project.
- Strategy 3.5.2 To prepare and submit to the Planning Commission and City Council similar impact analyses for public investment projects, such as roads, public buildings and other public facilities.
- Strategy 3.5.3 To work with VDOT to reduce and mitigate adverse impacts of the future widening of I-81 on neighborhoods, businesses, and other areas along the corridor.

Goal 4. To meet the current and future needs of residents for affordable housing.

Objective 4.1 To study housing affordability in the region.

Strategy 4.1.1 To work with the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority and the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Continuum of Care to study and define housing affordability at the full range of income levels in the City and region.

Strategy 4.1.2 To work with Rockingham County to determine and obtain agreement on each locality's fair share of affordable housing within the City-County region and to develop goals for the provision of affordable housing.

Objective 4.2 To partner with the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority, the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Continuum of Care, and other community housing providers (serving the elderly, disabled, homeless, low/moderate income families, victims of violence, etc.) to address community housing needs throughout the region.

Strategy 4.2.1 To support the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Continuum of Care to monitor and develop programs to meet City-County affordable housing goals.

Strategy 4.2.2 To include as Harrisonburg-Rockingham Continuum of Care members all significant players in the regional housing market, such as, the City of Harrisonburg, Rockingham County, the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority, the Valley Housing Alliance, non-profit community housing providers (serving the elderly, disabled, homeless, low/moderate income families, victims of violence, etc.), and private sector housing developers and providers, etc., as well as

- other interested parties, including Harrisonburg City Public Schools and Rockingham County Public Schools.
- Strategy 4.2.3 To assist in the implementation of Harrisonburg-Rockingham Continuum of Care affordable housing programs.
- Strategy 4.2.4 To consider implementing a rental housing inspection and/or registration program to ensure that such housing is decent as well as affordable and to enforce occupancy restrictions and maintain records on approved rental units. Sufficient funding will need to be secured to establish this new program.
- Objective 4.3 To promote home ownership so as to increase the proportion of owner-occupied units in the City.
- Strategy 4.3.1 To support expansion of the Family Self-Sufficiency and Lease-to-Homeownership programs of the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority and other home ownership programs that might be developed by HRHA.
- Strategy 4.3.2 To work with private developers, non-profit community housing providers and rental housing providers to offer home-ownership opportunities for first-time low-moderate income homeowners (e.g., through HOME, Hope VI and other available housing programs).
- Objective 4.4 To identify areas of the City for affordable housing while promoting mixed income housing neighborhoods.
- Strategy 4.4.1 To designate the entire City as an area within the region currently providing housing affordable to a wide range of income levels.
- Strategy 4.4.2 To designate mixed use areas on the Land Use Guide as potential locations for new housing affordable to a wide range of income levels, including low to moderate income households.
- Objective 4.5 To support the development and adoption of a Ten Year Plan to end chronic homelessness in the City of Harrisonburg, as part of the goal to end chronic homelessness and help to move families and individuals into permanent housing.
- Strategy 4.5.1 To establish a taskforce to research and develop a Ten Year Plan document for the City of Harrisonburg.
- Strategy 4.5.2 To support the adoption of an action plan for the City.
- Strategy 4.5.3 To create an action plan to implement a Ten Year Plan for the City of Harrisonburg.
- Strategy 4.5.4 To support the implementation of the Plan.
- Objective 4.6 To promote Fair Housing policies in the City of Harrisonburg.

- Strategy 4.6.1 To establish a taskforce comprised of governmental, non profit and business entities to identify local fair housing barriers, solutions, and the development of an action plan.
- Strategy 4.6.2 To support the implementation of an action plan to promote Fair Housing policies within the City of Harrisonburg.

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Chapter 7

Education

Introduction

Harrisonburg is a city of education with two major universities, an excellent public school system, and highly regarded private schools. Many citizens of the City are affiliated with the schools, either working there or attending class, making school life a very important aspect of city life. The City is dedicated to making its public schools the best that they can be. Cooperation between City Council and the School Board is essential for meeting this broad goal. Cooperation between the City and the universities is also sought in efforts to meet many of the goals, objectives and strategies of this plan, from those supporting adult education to promotion of the arts (as discussed in Chapter 8) to economic development (as discussed in Chapter 13). The City wishes to continue its positive relationships with James Madison University and Eastern Mennonite University.

Background

Schools

The City's Public Schools have adopted both vision and mission statements to guide their work.

Vision Statement: "Motivate, Educate, and Celebrate: Learning together for a better future."

Mission Statement: "Our mission is to prepare every student to succeed and to contribute to a better world. We will strive to do this in an academically-challenging, safe, and nurturing environment where all students, parents, and community members are active participants."

The schools strive to provide a quality education to every student who comes to them.

School Facilities: Approximately 11 percent of the City's total population is enrolled in the public school system. While school enrollment has decreased slightly in the last two years, the school division grew substantially during the previous decade primarily due to immigration. That growth resulted in the need for additional classroom space. In 2008, two new schools, Skyline Middle School and Smithland Elementary School, were opened.

The City's public school system currently operates eight public school facilities. The physical capacity of school buildings is a dynamic measurement, due in part to the changing standards that result from legislative requirements to provide additional services for special populations. The original "intended" or "design" capacities are larger than the current "actual" capacities, due to these changing requirements. Table 7-1 shows a summary of the physical plants, and shows the capacities of the current school facilities.

Table 7-1: City of Harrisonburg School Facilities

School	Date of Original Construction	Acreage
Harrisonburg High School	2005	63
Thomas Harrison Middle School	1989	34
Skyline Middle School (campus shared with SMES)	2008	Part of a 65 acre shared campus.
Keister Elementary School	1955	17
Smithland Elementary School (campus shared with SKMS)	2008	Part of a 65 acre shared campus.
Spotswood Elementary School	1960	16
Stone Spring Elementary School	1993	23
Waterman Elementary School	1911	9

Source: Harrisonburg City Public Schools, Five Year Capital Improvement Plan, 2009.

Table 7-2: City of Harrisonburg School Capacities

School	2008 Totals	2008 Building Total	Actual Capacity*	Intended Capacity**
Harrisonburg High School	1259	1276	1350	1550
Thomas Harrison Middle School	742	754	915	925
Skyline Middle School	489	493	800	876
Keister ES	390	431	424	492
Spotswood ES	335	374	425	493
Stone Spring ES	302	352	488	492
Smithland ES	399	433	536	600
Waterman ES	345	385	447	451
Totals	4,261	4,498	5,385	5,879

Source: Harrisonburg City Public Schools.

* Number of students the facility can accommodate while providing space for mandated or specialized programming.

** Number of students the facility would accommodate w/o mandated or specialized programming, as originally designed.

With the opening of a new middle school and elementary school in the Fall of 2008, and the grade reconfiguration (K-4 at elementary schools and 5-8 at middle schools), the school division has addressed the overcrowding issues. The majority of the mobile classrooms that were used to address the gaps in available capacity have been removed. While no additional construction of schools is anticipated to be needed for several years, the next likely school project will be adding classroom space at Harrisonburg High School. This addition will not be needed for 5 to 10 years.

School Services: The school division offers an extremely wide range of services to the City's children in order to provide a quality education and meet individual student needs. Pre-school

classes at the elementary schools through college credit courses offered in our high school are available to students. Special Education classes and alternative education programs are also available for students who need them. Of the 4,261 total students in the system, 1,747 (41.0 percent) require English as a Second Language (ESL) services. (Note: The term English as a Second Language (ESL) and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) are analogous terms and are used interchangeably.) This is an extraordinarily high percentage compared to other jurisdictions in the Commonwealth. A relatively small proportion of the ESL student population has English language proficiency; most need extra help, which therefore requires additional staffing resources. Unless there are dramatic changes in the economic characteristics of the region, the City school system should expect the ESL population to continue to rise.

In recent years, federal and state legislative requirements have increased the challenges to the system. The school division annually reports achievement results for all students as a large group and the achievement of students is also reported in the following defined categories: students with disabilities, LEP students, economically disadvantaged students, white students, black students, and Hispanic students.

The City school system currently cooperates with the County school system through a joint consortium for purchasing (food supplies, etc.) and jointly operates the special education program for “low-incident” (low rate of occurrence) special populations in which shared services allows economies of scale for both systems. Massanutten Technical Center, which offers technical and vocational training and classes for high school and adult students, is also operated jointly by the City and County school systems.

Future Needs and Planned Facilities: As indicated in Table 7-2, the total current enrollment of the system is approximately 4,261 students. This reflects a decrease in our overall enrollment by 58 students from the 2007-08 school year. These trends are shown in Table 7-3. The School Board has set as a priority the construction or acquisition of a new school board office. Currently, the administrative staff is spread over two different facilities, which impacts efficiency.

Table 7-3: City of Harrisonburg School Enrollment Trends

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008
Number of Students	4,274	4,419	4,319	4,261
% Increase or Decrease from previous year	+3.0%	+3.4%	-2.3%	-1.3%

Source: Harrisonburg City Public Schools.

Table 7-4 shows the school system’s forecast for future enrollments. The school system currently is planning for a future annual growth rate of 1.0 percent in the public school population based upon recent trends. The 1.0 percent growth factor is revisited annually. The following chart indicates that 236 total students will be added over a five year period.

Table 7-4: City of Harrisonburg School Enrollment Forecasts

Year	Enrollment	Increase/Decrease	Percentage
2010-2011	4360	+45 students	1.04%
2011-2012	4405	+45 students	1.04%
2012-2013	4451	+46 students	1.04%
2013-2014	4496	+46 students	1.04%

Source: Harrisonburg City Public Schools.

Service and Facility Standards: For instructional staffing, the system uses class size targets and state standards for special education. Maximum class size targets are:

- Grades K-3: 18, 19, 20 and 21 students per teacher, respectively
- Grades 4-5: 22 students per teacher
- Grades 6-8: 23 students per teacher (not formally adopted)
- Grades 9-12: 24 students per teacher (not formally adopted)

However, school funding may alter these targets, resulting in slightly higher class sizes.

For school sites, the system uses the following standards:

- Elementary School: 20 acres (gross)
- Middle School: 40 acres (gross)
- High School: 60 acres (gross)

Education Goal, Objectives and Strategies

Goal 5. To provide a wide and equitably distributed range of educational opportunities for all ages.

Objective 5.1 To work with the School Board to assure the quality of public education and excellent educational outcomes for all enrolled children.

Objective 5.2 To continue to work with the School Board to monitor enrollment trends and projections to ensure quality educational facilities.

Strategy 5.2.1 To work collaboratively with the School Board on the implementation of school facility improvements.

Strategy 5.2.2 To assist the School Board in obtaining needed additional administrative space.

Strategy 5.2.3 To coordinate City staff and school staff annual estimates and forecasts of population and school enrollment.

Strategy 5.2.4 To hold annual meetings between the City Council and the School Board to review population growth and enrollment trends and discuss current and future school needs.

Objective 5.3 To work with the School Board to encourage needed neighborhood elementary schools in underserved areas of the City.

Strategy 5.3.1 To locate an elementary school in each quadrant of the City as the need arises.

Strategy 5.3.2 To design all new schools to fit into their neighborhood. Consideration should be given to making them easily accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists, not dominated by parking lots, attractive, residential in scale and setback, well-landscaped, and with lighting designed not to intrude into the neighborhood.

Objective 5.4 To promote educational programs for workforce development, training, retraining and life-long learning.

Strategy 5.4.1 To ensure close communication between the Harrisonburg Department of Economic Development, Blue Ridge Community College, Massanutten Technical Center, Dayton Learning Center, and existing and prospective businesses regarding educational needs of the workforce.

Strategy 5.4.2 To support Blue Ridge Community College in efforts to obtain grants for workforce development programs.

Strategy 5.4.3 To encourage James Madison University, Eastern Mennonite University, Blue Ridge Community College, and Bridgewater College to make degree and enrichment courses available to City residents.

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Chapter 8

Arts, Culture, & Historic Resources

Introduction

With a diverse population, two universities, and a significant past, the City of Harrisonburg has many artistic, cultural, and historic resources to make use of. Generally, the City's cultural enrichment is provided by the City's educational institutions, arts organizations, and the library system. The City has many quality historic resources recognized particularly in the downtown and in close-by neighborhoods, which provides much of the City's unique architectural character. The City has not made historic preservation a major focus, but interest in preservation continues to grow. This plan supports expansion of the City's arts, cultural, and historic offerings in an effort to enhance the quality of life for its citizens.

The Arts & Cultural Offerings

The City offers a number of special events and venues for the arts and other cultural pursuits to support the community's demographic characteristics and lifestyle choices. In the coming years, these efforts will create new opportunities for capturing the region's emerging "creative class."

This creative class is driven, in part, by higher education and an influx of important technology-based businesses, which include: James Madison University, Eastern Mennonite University, Blue Ridge Community College, Bridgewater College, Rosetta Stone, and Harrisonburg's Stanford Research Institute International initiative, all of which continue to shape the regional economy and lifestyles.

In 2000, the City helped establish the Arts Council of the Valley (ACV), a nonprofit cultural organization that was originally established to provide cultural and operational leadership for the 250-seat Court Square Theater. Over the years, the ACV has expanded its scope of programs and services, and now operates two downtown cultural venues: the historic Smith House with its Darrin-McHone Art Gallery and Court Square Theater.

In support of its mission, the Arts Council of the Valley: 1) produces and promotes quality visual and performing arts programs in the Harrisonburg/Rockingham area; 2) provides grants to support educational and community-based cultural initiatives; 3) cultivates and nurtures emerging arts organizations for limited periods (e.g., the Children's Museum, Valley 4th, and the Harrisonburg International Festival); and 4) participates in the revitalization of downtown Harrisonburg's Arts and Cultural district.

ACV's core operating funds are provided by grants from the City, Rockingham County, and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Each year, the ACV generates additional revenue through fundraising activities and other program-based sources.

In addition to the ACV and its two venues, the City boasts a number of cultural and historic attractions that are clustered in downtown's Arts and Cultural District, including the Virginia Quilt Museum, the Hardesty-Higgins House, Dance and Company, the Harrisonburg Children's Museum, OASIS Gallery, 150 Franklin Street Gallery, and Woodbine Cemetery.

JMU provides further opportunities for the study and exploration of the visual and performing arts. First and foremost, it is home to the recently opened Forbes Center for the Performing Arts,

which should greatly enrich and enlighten the community. The Forbes Center has five performing venues including a 600-seat Concert Hall, a 196-seat Recital Hall, a 450-seat Mainstage Theatre, a 200-seat Earlynn J. Miller Dance Theatre, and a 150-seat Studio Theatre. JMU also has the Sawhill, artWorks, and New Image Galleries, the Madison Art Collection, and the Institute for Visual Studies. JMU's Outdoor Sculpture Invitational features the work of nationally recognized sculptors on a rotating basis, which is open year round, and is located in front of Duke Hall.

EMU's Hartzler Library Art Gallery, the Hostetter Museum of Natural History, and Brackbill Planetarium round out the City's university-based cultural offerings.

Special interest cultural groups include The Playhouse, a nonprofit, volunteer-based community theater company, whose members perform three to four times a year at Court Square Theater, and the Shenandoah Valley Watercolor Society.

Libraries

The Massanutten Regional Library (MRL) is a private, non-profit organization supported jointly by the City of Harrisonburg, the County of Rockingham, and the County of Page. The Library's mission statement is as follows:

Mission Statement: "The Massanutten Regional Library supports individual achievement and community enrichment through reading and life-long learning. The Library is a reliable and trusted source of information for its patrons and ensures a free and unbiased flow of ideas for the community."

Existing Facilities and Services: The Main Library is located at 174 South Main Street in downtown Harrisonburg. There are also eight branch libraries in Rockingham and Page counties. In addition, bookmobile service is provided to various sites in the City and the Counties. An increasingly important service and facility provision in libraries today is Internet access. The MRL measures Internet use by the number of customer/user sessions in each building. The number of sessions is on an upward trend.

Future Needs and Planned Facilities: While there are no current plans for capital improvements, within five years, the MRL will need to establish a branch on the east side of the City in light of the significant development in that part of the City. Capital maintenance will be the main focus of budgeting efforts over the next five years.

In the longer term—within 15 years—a major suburban branch facility [minimum 20,000 square feet] will be needed on the east side of the City, as well as major renovation to the Main Library building downtown. The Main Library is expected to continue in its downtown location due to the broad benefits that such a location provides both for library patrons as well as the community at large. The downtown location has a high level of user activity and also helps draw people to the downtown area on evenings and weekends. It serves as a downtown anchor and helps support local businesses.

Historic Resources

Background

The Plan Background Information Supplement from the 2004 Comprehensive Plan update contains a five-page brief history of the City as well as listings of the City's historic resources surveyed to date. The reader is directed to the supplement to find this more detailed information.

Harrisonburg's Historic Assets and Previous Survey Efforts

Harrisonburg is fortunate that, while many historic resources have been lost, many historic properties still remain to tell the story of the City's rich history and to enrich the lives of its citizens. Beginning in 1958, these properties have been documented through historic sites surveys, providing the City with an invaluable inventory of its historic resources.

In 1958, the national HABS (Historic American Buildings Survey) inventory recorded the more prominent buildings in the City. Several additional buildings were added to the inventory by Isaac Terrall in 1972 during his survey of historic sites in Rockingham County. These early surveys included very little photographic documentation and lacked adequate written information for evaluating the properties. In addition, a number of these buildings have been destroyed over the years.

A more detailed survey of the downtown was undertaken in 1981 by Ann McCleary for the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission (VHLC) (VHLC is now the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR)) at the request of the Harrisonburg Downtown Development Corporation. This survey recorded 296 buildings and sites in sufficient detail to allow recommendations for the preservation of the downtown's architecturally and historically significant properties.

The remainder of the City was surveyed by Ms. McCleary in 1983-84 as part of a Rockingham County survey, including numerous individual buildings in the newly annexed portion of Harrisonburg, mostly farmsteads. During the summer of 1984, Ms. McCleary also surveyed 25 buildings in the historic core of the JMU campus. Both of these surveys were compiled into a 1985 VHLC-published survey report entitled, "The Valley Regional Preservation Plan: Evaluation of Architectural, Historic, and Archaeological Resources in Harrisonburg, Virginia." The report noted that surveyed properties are concentrated largely in the downtown area and on the JMU campus, and recommended further survey work concentrating on the late 19th and early 20th century residential neighborhoods surrounding the downtown core including: High Street, East and West Market Street, Mason and Main Streets, Franklin and Newman Streets, the neighborhoods west of High Street, and on the north side of the downtown. Ms. McCleary also recommended that a future survey document significant older houses within the many modern subdivisions on the fringes of the older City.

At that time, the survey also listed four City properties on the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places, including the Thomas Harrison House, the Anthony Hockman House, the Joshua Wilton House, and the County Courthouse. One property, the Morrison House, was noted as removed from the Register after its recent demolition.

Ms. McCleary indicated that the low number of registered buildings was not indicative of the City's architectural fabric and listed 11 additional downtown buildings as potentially eligible for the state and national registers, including Church of the Brethren, the Ney House, the old First National Bank, Rockingham County Office Building, Rockingham Motor Company, the Newman/Ruddle Building, the Isaac Atkins House, the L & S Diner, Crystal Service (no longer existing), the Chesapeake and Western Railroad Station, and the Craft (Higgins) House. The McCleary survey also included a list of architecturally significant buildings in the downtown study area meriting rehabilitation and/or preservation. The report recommended that the 52 buildings on this list be preserved in their settings to help retain their historic character. A thematic nomination to the register was recommended for railroad-related sites, including the historic warehouses along the tracks. In addition, JMU's original campus was recommended for the Virginia and National Registers as a historic district.

VDHR records show three individually surveyed historic buildings, besides the Morrison House, have been demolished since the 1985 survey report, including the Bassford House on North Liberty Street, the Jehu Bear House on South Main Street and the Henry Ott House at 254 Newman Avenue. It also noted the loss of the house of Reuben Harrison, Thomas Harrison's son, in 1982. In addition, many other structures were lost during the 1960's Urban Renewal Program, which cleared blighted areas all over the country for redevelopment. One of the oldest houses in the City, the Henry Ott House (1858) was destroyed by fire in 1975.

In 1983, the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission recommended that the Harrisonburg Post Office be registered. This imposing Georgian Revival building was constructed in 1939. The United States Postal Service never acted to pursue listing of this building on the historic registers.

The next effort at cataloguing the City's historic resources came in 1987, when Land & Community Associates completed a survey of the JMU campus as part of a State-Owned Properties Statewide Survey. This survey listed 36 sites in and around the original quadrangle, including the quadrangle itself. The survey notes that JMU provides the earliest examples of architect Charles Robinson's campus planning for Virginia's colleges, being the first state normal school designed by him. Construction following his original Beaux-Arts scheme occurred between 1908 and 1940. This survey agreed with the McCleary recommendation that the original JMU campus was eligible for the Virginia and National Landmarks.

A list of the survey records from Harrisonburg, on file with the VDHR, is included in the Plan Background Information Supplement. There are 483 standard VDHR files, plus 24 additional survey files prepared by the Virginia Department of Transportation for transportation construction projects and to catalogue Harrisonburg's bridges. Missing from this list are the survey files for the 1981 downtown survey, which was done in blocks and assigned survey numbers 115-0027 through 115-0053.

Historic Preservation Efforts

Harrisonburg was the last county seat in the Shenandoah Valley from Winchester to Lexington and the last City or town between Winchester and Staunton to have a State or National Register-designated district. All of this survey work has left Harrisonburg with a wealth of information on

its historic assets and many recommendations for measures to ensure that these resources are protected for future generations.

Listing on the Virginia and National Registers brings no regulatory requirements for property owners, but makes the properties eligible for state and federal tax credits for rehabilitation of historic structures within the district. It also requires state and federal agencies to avoid actions that might harm historic structures within the district. Properties within historic districts also tend to appreciate in value at a faster rate than other properties, providing benefits to historic property owners and to the community's tax base.

There have been several efforts to establish districts within the City. The VDHR worked with Harrisonburg on two separate districts during the late 1990s. In September 1995, the Planning and Community Development Department submitted a Preliminary Information Request application for VDHR to determine if a proposed Court Square Historic District would be eligible for listing on the Virginia and National Registers. The proposed district encompassed 35 acres including the original town boundaries around Court Square, as well as along both sides of Main Street from Gay Street on the north and to the JMU campus on the south. The proposed district included residential, commercial and governmental buildings dating from the 1870s to the 1930s. It was the stated intent of the proposed district to encourage property owners to take pride in the historic character of the area, to make these properties eligible for state and federal tax incentives for restoration and rehabilitation, and to help preserve the buildings for future generations.

In February 1996, VDHR determined that the proposed district was eligible for listing on the Virginia and National Registers. The Committee for Downtown Harrisonburg requested that the City pursue the designation, but some downtown property owners expressed concern about possible future restrictions on their property. The City Council decided not to nominate the district to the registers.

In October of 1997, the City of Harrisonburg submitted a Preliminary Information Form application for a second proposed historic district, the Old Town Historic District. The Old Town neighborhood, located between downtown and JMU, has long served as a prominent residential area and includes many fine homes dating from the early 1900s. The proposed district was bounded on the north by the 200 block of East Water Street, on the east by the east side of Ott Street, on the south by the northern side of Cantrell Avenue, and on the west by South Main Street. In April 1998, the VDHR Review Board determined that the Old Town Historic District would be eligible for listing on the Virginia and National Registers. A group of neighborhood residents worked on completing survey forms on all of the structures within the proposed district, and by November 1999 had 81 forms completed. The survey work was never completed. Following the two surveys of the JMU campus in the 1980s, little effort was made to nominate the campus to the Virginia and National Registers until 2002, when students in a JMU History class tried to pursue the designation with the JMU Administration. No action has been taken by JMU to date to complete the nomination process. As of 2002, however, the Governor has a new memorandum of agreement with VDHR to encourage more State-owned properties to be listed on the National Register.

The Harrisonburg-Rockingham County Historical Society, located in Dayton, provides a wealth of additional information relating to Harrisonburg's history. In 1995, the Society launched a major initiative to become the finest regional historical society in the Commonwealth. This led to a new 5,000 square-foot exhibit on Rockingham County history, the expansion of its Shenandoah Valley folk art collection, re-engineering of its electric map on Stonewall Jackson's Shenandoah Valley Campaign, and significant additions to its genealogy library. It also maintains an extensive photographic collection.

A recent historic preservation effort in the City was directed at the rehabilitation and expansion of the Lucy F. Simms School on Simms Avenue, which is now known as the Lucy F. Simms Center for Continuing Education. A nomination of this historic City school to the Virginia and National Registers was submitted and approved by the Virginia Landmarks Commission.

In 2003, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance formed a Historic District Advisory Committee to consider the advantages and disadvantages of creating a downtown historic district. The committee was composed of City and property owner representatives. After months of meetings and consultation with the Department of Historic Resources and other communities in the state, the group recommended application for a historic district with the understanding that Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance would not advocate for the creation of a local historic district and architecture review board in the future. In 2004, the City contracted with Landmark Preservation Associates to conduct the architectural survey and submit the nominations forms. In December 2004, the Downtown Historic District was designated a Virginia Historic Landmark, and in January 2005, the district was listed in the National Register for Historic Places.

Following more than a year of discussion and meetings between representatives of Old Town, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance, and the Department of Historic Resources, the decision was made by Old Town residents to contract with Sabe Preservation Consulting to conduct the architectural survey and submit the nomination forms to create a historic district. In September 2007, the Old Town Historic District was placed in the Virginia Landmarks Register, and then in February 2008, the district was entered into the National Register of Historic Places.

Potential for Future Historic Preservation Efforts

The City has had extensive survey and district preparation work completed over the past 20 years, which helped to lay the groundwork for the creation of the two historic district designations. This information provides a rich resource for those interested in the City's fascinating history, as well as a strong foundation for future preservation efforts.

Many communities have realized their historic buildings not only provide a link to their past, but also a powerful economic asset. Cities such as Staunton and Lexington have had great success using the National Main Street Center's Main Street approach to downtown revitalization, which is a proven comprehensive program for enhancing historic downtown commercial areas. An average of \$25.00 is reinvested in the community for every \$1 spent on Main Street programs nationwide.¹

¹ The National Main Street Center web site: www.mainstreet.org

The National Main Street program offers a four-point approach through community driven, comprehensive strategies to revitalize downtowns and neighborhood business districts. The four points include: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. These four points are also accompanied by eight strategies for communities to utilize in their revitalization efforts. In recognition of the great potential of the Main Street approach to assist Harrisonburg in enhancing its downtown, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance pursued a Main Street revitalization program for the City's historic core and achieved this designation in August 2004. Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance, initiated by City Council in April 2002, is developing a comprehensive vision and master plan to revitalize downtown Harrisonburg based on the Main Street four-point approach. Rehabilitation of historic buildings to enhance the physical appearance of the district is one of the major strategies of the Main Street approach.

Rehabilitation of historic buildings creates local jobs and generates local sales for specialized construction materials. Rehabilitated buildings in traditional downtowns are great locations for the small businesses that drive local economies, because their sizes lend themselves to a variety of smaller retail and office spaces. In many cities, they also have become magnets for incubator businesses, such as the Rosetta Stone language learning software company in downtown Harrisonburg that was started by a JMU professor and his family. Harrisonburg's historic buildings provide significant opportunities for such innovative business development.

Historic downtowns have a character that is conducive to tourism and entertainment businesses that can draw revenues from outside of the City as well. Well-preserved downtowns increase the quality of life of the community and help in attracting and retaining new business and industry. All of these benefits also translate into higher tax revenues for the community through higher real property values, higher transient occupancy taxes and higher sales tax revenues. Beyond these benefits, the preservation of the community's historic assets ensures that its history is understood and protected and provides an important context for new development that will respect and enhance the existing community, rather than make it just another "Anytown, U.S.A."

With the creation of the historic districts, one concern is the real and potential loss of contributing buildings to demolition. Not only can this compromise the historic character of downtown and residential neighborhoods, but if too many buildings are demolished, it could lead to the de-designation of the historic districts and the accompanying loss of tax credits for rehabilitating historic buildings. This concern must be balanced with the interests of maintaining property rights and avoiding over regulation.

Although not located within the City's downtown, one of the City's historic landmarks recently received a significant improvement. The Turner Ashby Monument, maintained by the United Daughters of the Confederacy, was accessible from a private street off of Port Republic Road, but is now accessible from Turner Ashby Lane; a public cul-de-sac street, completed in early 2009, which intersects Neff Avenue between Port Republic Road and Reservoir Street. The improvements include better parking options and offer visitors and tourists a more user friendly entrance to the monument.

Historic Resources Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goal 6. To provide a wide and equitably distributed range of arts and cultural opportunities for all ages.

Objective 6.1 To expand arts and cultural opportunities with a focus on creating a major arts district in the downtown/JMU area.

Strategy 6.1.1 To continue promoting the Arts & Cultural District in the downtown area as established by Chapter 5 of the Harrisonburg City Code.

Strategy 6.1.2 To support organizations focusing on the arts and to support the efforts of Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance.

Strategy 6.1.3 To cooperate with James Madison University in the development of a Cultural Arts campus on the west side of Main Street.

Strategy 6.1.4 To include an arts calendar or a link to an arts calendar on the City's web site.

Strategy 6.1.5 To display the work of local artists in City facilities.

Objective 6.2 To improve library offerings through expansion of internet access and the development of branch libraries.

Strategy 6.2.1 To monitor the amount of internet use at the main library and its branches in order to provide sufficient computer stations, capacity, and speed to meet the internet needs of library patrons.

Strategy 6.2.2 To plan for future branch library needs on the east side of the City – a branch, perhaps in rented or donated space, within five to ten years and a major new branch facility as may be needed in the future.

Goal 7. To celebrate the City's heritage and preserve and protect its historic resources as essential elements of the City's economic health, aesthetic character, and sense of place.

Objective 7.1 To disseminate information about the history and historic resources of the City of Harrisonburg.

Strategy 7.1.1 To make the Visitor Center and gift shop operated by the Harrisonburg Tourism & Visitor Services, in the historic Hardesty-Higgins House, a sales outlet for historical publications and a source of information on the historic resources and sites in the City.

Strategy 7.1.2 To create a partnership between the Harrisonburg Tourism & Visitor Services and the Massanutten Regional Library to develop a historical research section in the library to which visitors to the Hardesty-Higgins House Visitors Center could be referred.

Strategy 7.1.3 To develop a walking tour of historic sites in downtown Harrisonburg with appropriate brochures and signage, such tour to begin at the Hardesty-Higgins House visitors center.

Strategy 7.1.4 To seek establishment of the Hardesty-Higgins House visitors center or other site in the City as the visitor orientation center for the Cross Keys/Port Republic Civil War Battlefields Cluster in cooperation with the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation.

Objective 7.2 To promote and recognize quality historic preservation projects.

Strategy 7.2.1 To partner with the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society to implement an annual preservation awards program to recognize quality preservation projects.

Objective 7.3 To establish historic districts.

Strategy 7.3.1 To work with local groups and the Department of Historic Resources to seek designation of historic districts in such areas as:

- Residential neighborhoods adjacent to the Downtown Historic District;
- James Madison University historic campus (in collaboration with JMU)

Strategy 7.3.2 To seek funding from the Department of Historic Resources for survey work and assistance with National Register Historic District nominations.

Strategy 7.3.3 To explore the option of passing an ordinance that would require approval from City Council before a demolition permit is granted or before architectural changes are made to a contributing building in a historic district.

Objective 7.4 To conserve City-owned historic resources and to ensure that City development projects respect and reflect the historic character of the City and site context.

Strategy 7.4.1 To catalogue all City-owned properties that have historic value.

Strategy 7.4.2 To adopt policies for treatment of City-owned historic properties (maintenance, renovation, additions, and conditions when demolition is warranted) so as to preserve their historic value.

Strategy 7.4.3 To take advantage of federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits by partnering with the private sector on City property rehabilitation projects.

Strategy 7.4.4 To assess and mitigate the impacts of all City projects on adjacent historic resources and areas.

Strategy 7.4.5 To design new City public facilities so that they respect and complement the historic character of the City and site context.

Strategy 7.4.6 To develop a plan to renovate the Municipal Building consistent with its historic character.